

THE TIMES

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PAGE 16

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PAGE 25

Security teams co-ordinate efforts

British alert over Saddam terror strike

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE
CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S intelligence agencies, Scotland Yard and the Home Office are drawing up contingency plans in case President Saddam Hussein attempts to use biological or chemical agents in terrorist attacks in Britain.

The director of the Home Office's police policy directorate, Stephen Boyd Smith, is in charge of co-ordinating plans. These are expected to include a repeat of an exercise carried out in 1991 before the start of the American-led allied campaign to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991. Then officials held a secret exercise in London to rehearse the steps to be taken in the event of an Iraqi terrorist attack using anthrax or nerve gas.

No such attack took place and, although Saddam said that he would launch terrorist missions against London and other coalition capitals, the threat proved groundless.

While MI6 is in overall charge of assessing all the intelligence, information gleaned by its own sources, MI6 and GCHQ (the electronic eavesdropping facility in Cheltenham), the Home Office and Scotland Yard have focused on the emergency measures.

Senior officials from Porton Down, the Chemical and Biological Defence agency in Wiltshire, headed by Paul Taylor, the director, and military personnel from the Ministry of Defence have also played a key role in advising the Home Office.

Although the possibility of Iraqi terrorists succeeding in bringing nerve agents or anthrax into Britain is thought to be highly unlikely, all the relevant departments and agencies have met to ensure that the contingency plans are adequately robust.

Security sources emphasised that all the steps being taken were "sensible precautions" and did not arise from any specific intelligence of an Iraqi plot. They said the risks were probably greater for British interests overseas which might be more vulnerable to opportunistic attacks.

A spokeswoman for the Foreign Office said all businessmen travelling in the region had been warned to be vigilant. The official added: "Travelling to Iraq would be foolhardy in the extreme."

Security sources said yesterday that there was only one precedent for a terrorist attack using non-conventional material — the 1995 attack on the Tokyo underground by a doomsday cult using plastic bags filled with sarin nerve gas agent. Twelve people died and 5,000 were injured.

The sources said: "This was an attack by an indigenous group and it would be far more difficult for a terrorist to bring such material into Britain. But no one is being complacent and we are looking at all possibilities. A strong emphasis is being laid on the importance of intelligence-gathering to counter any such threat to this country."

MI6 is providing a regular threat assessment and is also responsible for giving advice to the Government on the best protective measures needed to maintain absolute vigilance.

Although the contingency plans were set up to deal with nuclear, chemical and biological attacks, the assessment is that any threat arising from the current crisis is more likely to come from conventional weapons. "The vast majority of terrorist attacks over the last 30 years have involved bombs and bullets," one source said.

Weapons of mass destruction had a "greater dread factor" but it would be wrong, the sources said, to "hype up" the dangers of such a threat in the present circumstances.

Iraq has no delivery system, such as long-range ballistic missiles, capable of hitting Britain, although its longest range Scud missiles can reach other parts of the Middle East, such as Israel, as was demonstrated in the Gulf War.

A spokesman for Porton Down said that its experts on chemical and biological warfare were giving advice to the Home Office but there had been "no crisis meetings".

INSIDE

Compromise plan 10
TV war fears 11
White flag 20

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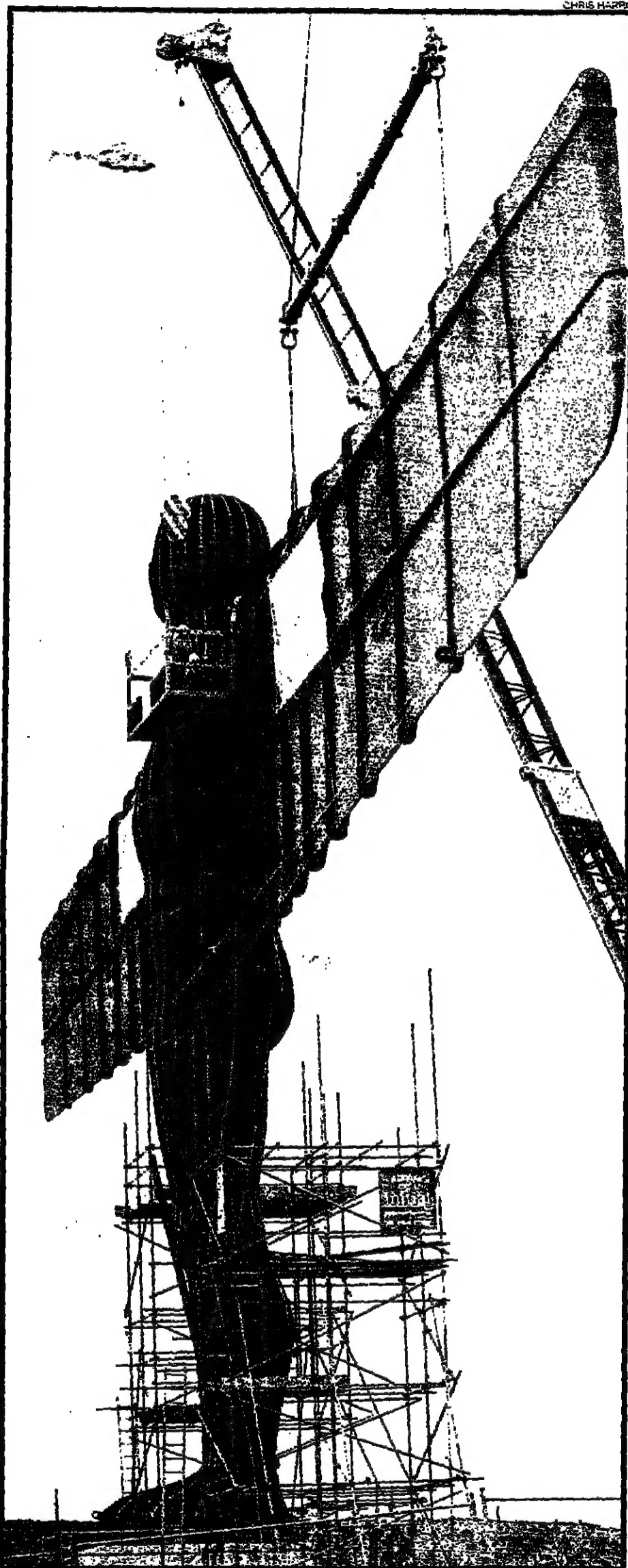
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ON A windswept hillside beside the A1 Britain's biggest sculpture finally took shape yesterday (Paul Wilkinson writes).

It can withstand winds of 100 mph but there was no escaping the storm of controversy which continues to rage around the £800,000 cost of Anthony Gormley's *Angel of the North*. The crowd on the

Angel flies into storm

hill overlooking Gateshead was divided over whether the 60-ft steel construction, with the wingspan of a jumbo jet, was either a work of inspiration or a spectacular waste of

money. Sam Arnold, a shipyard worker, said: "I think it is magnificent. My two lads are gobsmacked by it." But Martin Callanan, 36, a former Conservative councillor said: "I don't feel proud. I feel angry. The money has come mostly from the lottery, the EU, and Northern Arts."

Leading article, page 21

Pensioners taskforce to improve life for the old

By NICHOLAS WATT, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

SIX Government ministers have been appointed to a "pensioners taskforce" to find ways of improving life for Britain's 10 million pensioners.

John Denham, the Pensions Minister, set up the group in response to criticism that Labour's welfare reforms will come too late for many old people. The Government's pensions reform will not become law until after 2000.

The three key aims are to reduce the cost of travel, lower the cost of fuel bills and subsidise television licences.

One member of the new group, the Trade Minister Nigel Griffiths, has already implemented a five-point plan to help the elderly. This includes action against cowboy builders who target the elderly and a crackdown on rogue salesmen.

Mr Griffiths said some gas companies are behaving "outrageously" by tricking old people into signing up to their service. The companies circumvent regulations which give consumers the right to cancel a signed agreement if a salesman arrives unannounced. The salesmen ask elderly people whether they would like a second visit, which is then regarded as an invitation.

Glenda Jackson, the Transport Minister, who at 61 is herself a pensioner, is examining cutting the costs of travel. Pensioners, who receive free travel in London, the West Midlands and Merseyside, are campaigning for this to be extended nationwide regardless of income.

Mark Fisher, the Culture Minister, is examining how television licences can be reduced. Pensioners groups complain that pensioners living on their own have to pay the full £94.50 fee, while people in sheltered accommodation pay a nominal £5. Under one option hotels would be charged for every television set, raising enough to halve pensioners' licences.

Paul Boateng, the Health Minister, is looking at ways of rehabilitating elderly people out of hospital. Labour has already fulfilled a manifesto commitment to set up a Royal Commission into long-term care.

Alan Howarth, the Employment Minister with responsibility for the disabled, is monitoring equal opportunities and age discrimination. The group also wants Mr Howarth's Education and Employment Department to improve opportunities for the elderly. The ministers have been meeting with little fanfare because of fears that the Tories will accuse Labour of planning dramatic increases in spending on the elderly. But Mr Denham yesterday hailed the new group for giving pensioners "a voice at the heart of Government".

He said: "This is a valuable opportunity for ministers to meet and understand what each other hopes to achieve for retired people and to look at ways we can all ensure that the Government is able to respond to the interests of pensioners. We want to enhance their contribution to society."

Ministers believe that virtually every Government department can have an impact, which means that six ministers from five departments sit on Mr Denham's group.

Higher pay may push up rates

Bank of England hawks anxious to raise interest rates further will be bolstered by data from the CBI showing a jump in agreed pay rise at the end of last year.

Pay awards in service industries averaged 4.5 per cent, against 3.8 per cent in manufacturing. Page 48

War on violence

Teachers will today be given "rules of engagement" on how to restrain violent pupils and break up fights in the battle to keep order in schools. They are told that physical intervention must never be viewed as punishment. Page 4

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TV & RADIO	46, 47
WEATHER	24
CROSSWORDS	24, 48
LETTERS	21
OBITUARIES	23
W. REES-MOGG	20
ARTS	18-19
CHESS & BRIDGE	38
COURT & SOCIAL	22
SPORT	25-29
STYLE	16
BUSINESS	41-46, 48



Expelled Sinn Fein 'may never return'

By MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

IF Sinn Fein is suspended from the peace talks today, "events on the ground" could prevent it ever returning, Martin McGuinness, the party's chief negotiator, said yesterday.

Mr McGuinness denied he was predicting a return to full-scale IRA violence, though he said the dangers were "obvious to everyone". But he did suggest that those determined to wreck the peace process could make Sinn Fein's return impossible by committing terrorist acts for which the IRA could be blamed.

The talks move to Dublin Castle, the former seat of British rule, for three days from this morning, and Sinn Fein will vigorously resist ejection, even as four West Belfast men appear in court charged with last Tuesday's murder of Robert Dougan, a leading loyalist paramilitary. Gerry Adams and Mr

McGuinness will argue that Sinn Fein had nothing to do with the murder of Mr Dougan or of Brendan Campbell, a drugs dealer, the previous night. The party is threatening legal action if expelled.

But Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, will present what is said to be compelling evidence of IRA involvement in the murders. The IRA, which last night support for Sinn Fein appeared almost non-existent, Mr Mowlam said no one wanted to negotiate with a gun at their head. Bertie Ahern, the Irish Prime Minister, said the information he had received was "very worrying".

Technically, the talks can continue without Sinn Fein. Its vote is not required under the "sufficient consensus rule" because the SDLP speaks for a majority of nationalists.

Chips with everything may be good for some

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

LOW-FAT diets, an article of faith among doctors for a generation, may be useless or even damaging for two thirds of the population. Dr Ronald Krauss of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, California, has found that response to a low-fat diet entirely depends on an individual's genes.

For one in three reducing the intake of saturated fat may represent the best hope of avoiding a heart attack by lowering cholesterol which is implicated in the process in

which arteries become furred. There are two kinds of cholesterol: the damaging kind, called low-density lipoprotein (LDL), which sticks to the artery lining, and the good kind, called high-density lipoprotein (HDL), which protects against heart disease.

Dr Krauss and his colleagues have established that there is a further subtlety. Some people have a particular type of LDL, called pattern B, which gives them a raised heart disease risk as well as an increased risk of diabetes. "This trait is found in about one in three adult men, and one in five to six

postmenopausal women," Dr Krauss said. People with this profile who go on diets very low in fat are likely to benefit.

But for the rest — two thirds of men and five sixths of women which he calls pattern A — the opposite may be true. Most showed no benefit and, worryingly, a proportion actually flipped to pattern B.

When a group of 87 pattern A men were given the low fat diets, a third of them shifted to the pattern B profile. This means that over 20 per cent of men could potentially suffer adverse consequences.

The standard advice is to

reduce the total amount of calories taken as fat to 30 per cent. Dr Krauss does not believe following these recommendations can do any harm, but questions the value of lowering fat levels further.

The findings may help explain many puzzling results obtained in large-scale dietary interventions. These studies have been far less effective in reducing death rates than their originators hoped.

Dr Krauss says that the results should not influence those who have tried to cut fat moderately — though he has no evidence to corroborate this.



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Rainmaking, page 15
Forecast, page 24



Sunbathers on Brighton beach yesterday. Temperatures rose to 18C as much of Britain basked in Mediterranean conditions

BY DANIEL MCGRORY

speech is to be regretted." The Bishop of Leicester, Dr Tom Butler, said: "I am very sad that this is happening. Westminster Abbey is a national shrine, so it looks as if the nation is honouring him in a unique way. It sends the wrong message to the black community."

Canon Ivor Smith-Cameron, a chaplain to the Queen, said last night: "Those who made this decision have made a grave error of judgment. They have brought a sense of dishonour on themselves."

"Let him lie in St Margaret's but not the Abbey, which is for the Commonwealth, for national and international gatherings. Those of us who have worked for community tolerance will remember with terror the damage that man caused."

He added that clerical critics of the move should not try to prevent or disrupt the present arrangements.

Church officials said this special honour was not to Powell the politician who died

A black and white portrait of a man with a mustache, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie. He is also wearing a dark fedora-style hat. The image is high-contrast and grainy, typical of a photocopy.

**Powell: was warden
at St Margaret's**

tive MP for Rochford and Southend East, said: "Enoch Powell was a deeply religious man and concerned about the good of society.

"It would be appalling if church leaders were to place their own interpretation on what he said and to use this as a reason for not having his body in the Abbey. This is inconsistent with Christian teaching. This merely adds to the grief of his friends and relatives, and may well spark off the kind of reaction which these church leaders would not want."

Diary, page 20

BY CAROL MIDGLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

A HUGE sculpture, larger than the Statue of Liberty, will form a spectacular centerpiece to the Millennium Dome, it was confirmed yesterday. The naked, human figure, made of silver steel and glass fibre, will be hollow, to allow visitors to walk inside and see interactive exhibits about bodily functions and cycle of life.

Arguments are still raging about what sex the statue should be. Some executives from the New Millennium Experience Company, which is overseeing the project, believe that it should be a mother, complete with 40ft baby. Others say it should be a man and a third contingent wants it to be an androgynous figure to combat accusations of gender favouritism.

The 320ft figure, 20ft taller than the Statue of Liberty, will sit or recline on the floor, with its legs outstretched. Even in the sitting position it will reach the roof. It will be made of the 170ft tubes making it as tall as Nelson's Column. Its designers want it to celebrate the complexity of the human body.

"There will be a body in the dome on that kind of scale," a spokesman said. "Inside will

be exhibits relating to health issues, medicine, human durability, and the cycle of life. But no decision has been taken on whether it will be androgynous, male or female."

One option would be to make the statue pregnant, to enable the designers to show how a child develops in the womb from the moment of conception. The choice of a silver surface was made to avoid conflict over skin colour.

A large-scale model could be ready for February 24, when Peter Mandelson, minister in charge of the millennium celebrations, will unveil some of the 575th million dome's leading attractions. The grand ceremony is aimed at winning corporate sponsors for the project.

The New Millennium Experience Company yesterday declined reports that the investment bank Goldman Sachs had been approached as a first buyer to develop the structure at the end of 2000. The company insists it has not signed any contracts with the bank to handle a sale. A decision on the future use of the site would be taken in 2000, it said.

French police hunting the murderer of Caroline Dickinson, 13, have received more than 400 calls since releasing a photo of the suspect and setting up a telephone line last Friday. Jean-Pierre Michel, head of the Saint Malo police, said that at least 20 had provided "interesting leads", which were being actively pursued by investigators. An Internet address has also been set up and had attracted promising information, he said.

A national computer system that stores details of thousands of bullets and makes automatic comparisons in a few seconds is being planned by the Home Office and police. Once the £500,000 ballistics system begins operation forensic science laboratories in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland would be instantly linked. At the moment there is no national collection of guns, bullets and cartridges linked to crime.

Businessmen and academics will be invited for the first time to sit on the Conservative's main policy-making body. William Hague will announce today that Peter Lilley, the shadow Chancellor, will chair the new 11-strong board of the Conservative Policy Forum, which will appoint five outsiders, including businessmen, to help draw up party policy. The board will also include three elected members drawn from constituency or area deputy chairmen.

A young British electrician who accepted an invitation to have a beer with friends in a Bangkok apartment was arrested during a police raid and now faces 25 years in prison on drugs charges. From a cramped prison cell in Bangkok, David Bowley, from Colville, Leicester, said: "It was only there for the beer, but Thai police think I am something big in the drugs world and they threw me in here." Mr Bowley has been locked up for nearly a week.

Welfare reform in Britain must be driven by painful financial sanctions for single parents and the unemployed to have any lasting effect, an American sociologist says today. Charles Murray argues in a pamphlet from the Social Market Foundation, an independent think-tank, that the main aim of reform must be to change behaviour, not to cut bills. Lone parenthood must be discouraged because it has extreme negative effects on children.

Jack Straw will today reassure MPs that the Government will take action to ensure that a privacy law is not introduced by the backdoor restricting press freedom. Opening debate on the Human Rights Bill, the Home Secretary is not expected to detail plans to preserve press self-regulation, but is likely to suggest that safeguards will be written into the Bill, which incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law.

The teenage drama *Hollyoaks* was condemned by TV watchdogs for depicting an attempted rape. Channel 4 said the scene, broadcast around 6.30pm last October, had been carefully considered and contained no nudity. But the Independent Television Commission, upholding three complaints from viewers, said: "This portrayal of an extended assault could not be justified within family viewing time."

Britain's rarest freshwater fish, the vendace, which is found only in two lakes in Cumbria, is facing further loss of numbers. Scientists have found that new species of fish introduced into Bassenthwaite Lake and Derwent Water eat the same food as the vendace's eggs, threatening its survival. The Environment Agency is considering tough new controls on the use of livebait in the area and other means of stopping the introduction of fish including roach.

BY FRANCES GIBB
GAL CORRESPONDENT

THE discovery of files in which a leading tobacco company admitted that nicotine is addictive was welcomed by anti-smoking campaigners yesterday. Papers belonging to British American Tobacco allegedly show that the company admitted 20 years ago that cigarettes were highly addictive and that nicotine was poisonous.

The papers are being used by lawyers in the USA as evidence in a court case against the company to sue for the cost of treating smokers. The document, Key Account Project Innovation Over Next 10 years for the Term Development, is alleged to have been produced at BAT's Southampton base in August 1979.

TOBACCO 'LIES' FUELLED ADDICTION, SAYS FORMER US HEALTH CHIEF

THE former US Surgeon-General C. Everett Koop yesterday denounced the American tobacco industry for concealing information about the addictive nature of nicotine and the health effects of smoking (Nigel Hawkes writes).

effects of tobacco, and also knew early about how addictive was the nature of nicotine in tobacco," Dr Koop told the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Philadelphia.

The companies had enraged Americans, he said, yet they still sought to be regarded as respectable companies "rather than the renegades history has proven

and was aimed at finding a replacement for cigarettes. It states that the company was looking for a "socially acceptable addictive product" and that the "essential constituent is most likely to be nicotine or a direct

substitute for it". Lawyers in this country who are preparing Britain's first action by lung-cancer victims against Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco will not be able directly to use the evidence in their own case, but

the documents will be of help in proving the case against the industry as a whole. John Pickering, a partner with Irwin Mitchell who with Leigh Day & Co is acting for 50 lung-cancer victims, said: "This is very, very

significant. It would appear that these documents do exist. The tobacco companies have always denied the addictive properties of nicotine."

These papers are being entered in a court case in Minnesota. David Bacon, head of corporate communication at British American Tobacco, said: "This would appear to be a few pages from the 30 million pages we have made available voluntarily in Minnesota. You cannot draw conclusions from individual documents. They need to be considered in context. All aspects of the debate have been taking place in public for some time. It is not the case that what is taking place inside the company and that some documents contained reference to a subject which never became company policy."

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هكذا من الأصل

Earl's wife pulls her drowning son to safety

BY ADAM FRESCO

THE son of the 16th Earl of Lindsay was recovering in hospital last night after he survived several minutes trapped underwater in a flooded culvert flowing beneath a road.

David Lindsay-Bethune, four, was cycling with his mother, Lady Lindsay, when he fell from his bike into a ditch on the Knyddart Peninsula on the west coast of Inverness-shire. He was swept away into the culvert filled with floodwater and became trapped

under a road. By the time his mother pulled him free he was unconscious, had turned blue and stopped breathing.

Lady Lindsay gave him mouth to mouth resuscitation and a paramedic, who was climbing nearby, came to her assistance. The boy, who was suffering from severe hypothermia, was saved with the help of the Mallaig lifeboat, which was on exercise in the area, after a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was unable to reach them because of bad weather.

Lord Lindsay, whose title dates

back to the 17th century, said yesterday: "It was a very close call indeed. My wife's quick thinking has helped to save his life. The paramedic played a very big part and the emergency services, who had to co-ordinate a very difficult rescue operation, were great."

Lady Lindsay explained yesterday that she had gone to look for David after they went out riding together late on Saturday afternoon on their bicycles and he failed to keep up with her. She spotted his bike lying in a water-filled ditch and saw his hat floating in the fast

flowing water. She feared at that point it was too late to save him but she managed to pull him free from the culvert.

As she tried to bring him round his sister Alexandra, nine, raced into the remote community's main settlement at Inverie to get help. The paramedic was able to find and maintain a steady heartbeat while others phoned for the emergency services.

The helicopter was forced to halt its journey at Mallaig in the West Highlands and then the 52ft lifeboat was called into action. When it

arrived the youngster had regained consciousness but was "very very confused and hypothermic".

David's relieved mother was yesterday at his bedside in Raigmore Hospital in Inverness where he is described as being in a stable condition. Lord Lindsay, 43, who is the former Scottish agricultural minister, yesterday praised his wife's quick thinking.

The lord, who has five children, said: "It was a very close call indeed and I am just glad that everything turned out for the best. My wife has admitted to me that when she saw

his hat floating down the stream that she feared the worst.

"My wife was marvellous. My wife administered mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and he finally came round. My wife says it was the longest time of her life waiting for him to wake up. They were biking together at different speeds and she realised he was not behind her. She saw his bike half in the ditch and then saw him well underneath the road."

"He had become stuck so she dragged him back out but he was unconscious and not breathing. It

was the most ghastly experience for her. He was stuck right under the water. If she had not turned back as quickly as she did then things may have turned out differently."

"I have spoken to David on the phone and he remembers in fairly vivid detail falling from the bike and going under the water. We think he then became concussed. Hopefully he will be out of hospital soon and will quickly forget this terrible incident." Bruce Watt, 49, second coxswain of Mallaig lifeboat, said: "The real heroine in this story is the boy's mother."



The huge explosion as the half-ton Second World War German bomb is detonated at last, two days after residents were evacuated



Captain Peter Shields, leader of the bomb team, in the crater after the blast

The weekend that went with a bang

BY KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE bedraggled 1,100 evacuees of Chippenham were finally home last night, 48 hours after the discovery of two wartime German bombs forced them to abandon their pets, their Valentine plans and everything else they held dear. Their Blitz spirit did not quite last the full length of the operation.

Many had managed to sleep through the controlled explosion of a smaller bomb at 5.20am yesterday. They had been told that the bigger, half-ton bomb would be detonated at 11.15.

But reports of a jogger weaving his way around the outskirts of the 800-metre exclusion zone meant further delay as police and council chiefs attempted to

co-ordinate with Army experts to ensure the area was safe. On a vantage point on a hill above the site, the temporarily homeless shared tales of woe. Heather Wilkinson, 23, had popped out to get a video on Friday afternoon and was then refused entry back into her house: "I've even left my cat Mitti out all weekend." She had planned a romantic Valentine weekend with her partner Scott Ougley "but Friday 13 put paid to that".

Soe and Alan Carter, housekeepers to Tony Crew, the farmer who alerted planning experts that there might have been bombs on a school site, kept watch on the Grade II listed home only 500 metres from the detona-

tion site. Mrs Carter said: "We've left 30 budgies, six rabbits, six guinea pigs and countless chickens. The police granted one exception this morning when we were allowed to move our 12 horses so we took the opportunity to smuggle the cat out of the house."

The clock had struck one when the police shouted "Imminent" and the bomb disposal team could be seen running across the fields. Moments later the ground shook and a fountain of earth shot into the air.

Police had planned a controlled return of residents, but moments after the area was declared safe a flood of people jumped into cars and headed for home.

Woolwich goes gunning for Hollywood big-shots

BY CAROL MIDDLEY
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

UNTIL now it has been famed for its ferry and as the place which Arsenal Football Club left. But Woolwich may be destined for a more glamorous future as a home of British movies.

Proposals are being drawn up to turn the former Royal Arsenal weapons factory into a studio to rival Pinewood and to feed the demand for British films.

The South London garrison town attracts few visitors, largely because most of its many architectural splendours are hidden by fences and gatehouses. Arsenal FC, which took its name from the ordnance factory, deserted its birthplace in 1913 for Highbury, North London.

But the industrial landscape of Woolwich has been proving popular with film-makers. Box-office hits such as *The Saint*, *101 Dalmatians*, *The*

TOWN'S CLAIMS TO FAME

■ The slogan "I'm with the Woolwich" was invented to advertise the Woolwich Building Society, founded in 1847 in the upstairs room of a pub.

■ Woolwich opened the first McDonald's restaurant in Britain.

■ The council has produced architectural trails but they do not encompass the bingo hall, indoor market or multi-storey car park.

■ Woolwich's importance began in 1512 when Henry VIII opened the Royal Naval Dockyard. The Royal Artillery Barracks, built in 1775, have the longest single facade in the world.

■ During a visit of foreign dignitaries to the original gun foundry in 1716, water entered a mould as a gun was cast, causing an explosion that killed 17 people. The authorities moved it to a safer home in fields.

Avengers and *Nil By Mouth* were filmed in the area. Neighbouring Greenwich provided locations for 12 per cent of British television film productions during the first half of last year, including *Kavanagh QC*, *The Bill* and *Thief Takers*.

Greenwich borough has a

film unit offering prime location sites such as the Royal Naval College, National Maritime Museum and Royal Observatory, which are sought after by directors from Hollywood.

Greenwich Borough Council has launched a feasibility study into building a studio

complex in the Royal Arsenal, which once employed more than 80,000 people. The site was closed by the Ministry of Defence in 1995.

Janice Harwood, of Greenwich Borough Council, said a decision was yet to be made but councillors were keen to maximise the area's potential for film-making. "The idea of a film studio was mooted at a council meeting," she said. "A report was presented to councillors looking at the feasibility of having a film studio somewhere in the borough."

"We are a popular film location and there is quite a steer towards the Arsenal site. We believe there's great potential for a film studio here."

In 1996, plans were announced to restore the decaying Woolwich Arsenal and to open it to the public for the first time in 300 years. It was part of a £100 million regeneration of the whole of Woolwich, one of the most rundown areas of London.

Cartoons exterminate classics

BY CAROL MIDDLEY

EUROPEAN broadcasters should unite and take action to stop classic children's programmes in the mould of *Play School* and *Doctor Who* from being killed off by the growth of cartoons, a new study claims.

The report urges public service broadcasters to co-produce more shows and have more cross-border exchanges to ensure that the imaginative and creative qualities of children are nurtured by quality programming. It also calls for the regulation of advertising aimed at children.

The pan-European study, *The Integrity and Erosion of Public Television for Children*, says that children are often treated as consumers first and as developing individuals second. The emphasis was increasingly on grabbing children's attention and converting programme characters into toys, games,



Jon Pertwee with the Daleks in *Doctor Who*. Today children are more likely to watch cartoons

videos and posters. It said American influences were starting to take effect in scheduling strategies to build loyalty and viewing habits among young viewers, often through cartoons.

Jay Blumler, one of the report's co-authors, said: "The public service tradition of serving children as all-round developing personalities and future citizens is under threat." The report comes after Independent Television Commission research showed that children in homes with cable and satellite were turning away from terrestrial television to

watch cartoons on channels such as Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon. Terrestrial channels were being forced to compete.

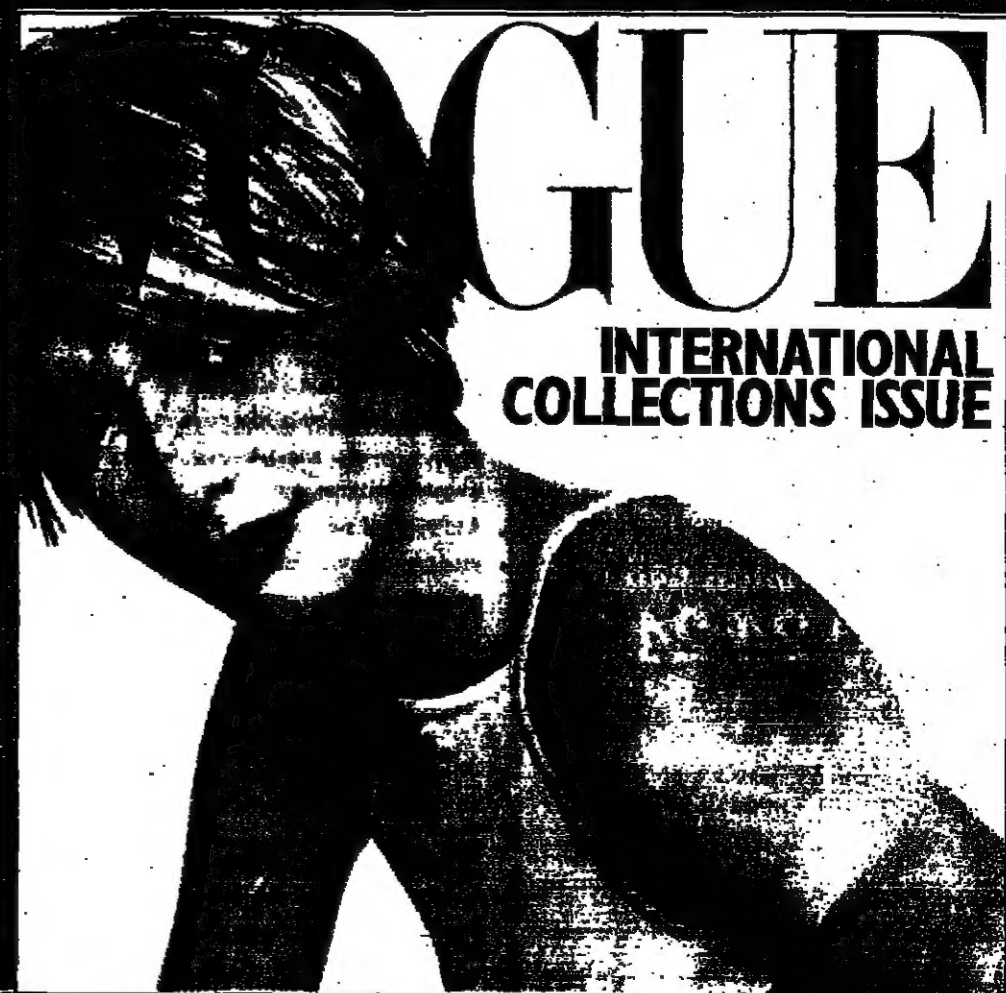
Professor Blumler, emeritus professor at the University of Leeds, and Professor Daniel Biltereyst, from the University of Ghent, called for the European Union to halt the creeping commercialisation and "Americanisation" seeping into public programming.

It said the Council of Europe and the European Broadcasting Union should support more co-production and exchanges between broadcasters. All except three channels — Channel 4, ZDF in Germany and DR in Denmark — had seen a decline in the amount of domestically produced programming and a rise in cartoons, mostly US imports. In 1991 there was an average of 202 hours of imported a year per channel. By 1995 it had risen to 340 hours.

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Ben Woolley and Rosemary Coventry in action. She said: "No one can take away my love of movement and dance"

Oxford takes steps to trip up dancer

OXFORD University did not miss a step when it discovered one of its own students was competing for Cambridge at a ballroom dancing contest.

Rosemary Coventry, 23, hoped to appear for the arch-rival because her dance partner and boyfriend, Ben Woolley, 21, studied at Cambridge. Oxford did not see it quite that way.

Now she has been barred from the Southern Universities ballroom dancing championship on Saturday, after a weekend poll of the event's team captains voted 5-4 that Cambridge must drop her. The decision is felt to improve Oxford's chances.

Miss Coventry, a Trinity chemistry undergraduate, specialises in quickstep and could have expected to come in the top three at the championships. Mr Woolley is a veterinary science student at Wolfson college. The Cambridge dance society felt she was eligible to dance for them because she is also registered as a management

Ruth Gledhill reports on a woman barred from contest for having a foot in both camps

studies student at Cambridge.

Cambridge came second to Bristol last year, with Oxford tying with Imperial for third place. Cambridge will now be forced to field B-team dancers.

The championship organiser, Tom Mathams, a PhD student at Cambridge, said: "The difficulty was brought up by Oxford. Both Rosemary and Ben were previously at Oxford. But he came to study at Cambridge and she registered on a course here and they were selected to dance for the

Cambridge A team. Because this situation is not covered by our constitution, we had to put it out to a vote. It is all highly competitive."

The Oxford team captain, Jo McPartland, said: "She did at one point dance for Oxford. She was our club secretary last year. Suddenly, the next thing we know is she is trying to dance for Cambridge."

Miss Coventry said: "All I want to do is dance. But I am taking the decision philosophically. Some things come and go, but the most important thing is that no one can take away my love of movement and dance." Despite months of training, she is prepared to let her partner dance with another woman if anyone could be found at such short notice.

Competition on the university dance circuit is particularly keen between Oxford and Cambridge. Dancers at Oxford can now qualify for a full-blue although women at Cambridge are eligible for half-blues.

Mother feared drowned after yacht club dip

By ADAM FRESKO

A MOTHER of three was feared drowned last night after her 21-month-old baby was found alone at a riverside yacht club.

Jackie Isaacs, 31, is believed to have gone for a swim in the Thames near the Thurrock Yacht Club, Essex, and got into difficulties with strong currents. Her son, Joseph, was found naked beside his pushchair by staff at the club late on Saturday evening. He was taken to Basildon hospital suffering from hypothermia but is said to be making a good

recovery. His mother's clothes, jewellery and watch were found in the mud near the water's edge.

Mrs Isaacs was said to have been in good spirits when she arrived at the club on Saturday. She had a drink and had bought a ticket for a Valentine's night dance that evening. Her two other children, a nine-year-old girl and a son, were visiting her ex-husband when she disappeared.

A search involving police and firemen, three boats, dogs and a helicopter fitted with a thermal imaging camera failed to find her. Police said that if she had jumped or fallen into the water, strong currents would possibly keep her body deep under water for several days.

Chief Inspector Terry Shearn, leading the inquiry, said that Mrs Isaacs had spoken to staff at the club and said that it was lovely weather for swimming. "We have not ruled out the possibility of suicide or that she could, for some reason, be safe and well somewhere," he said. "Her family are extremely concerned and it is vital she contacts us straight away if she is safe."



Jackie Isaacs' baby was found naked by river

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Blair aims to stop sales of tacky Diana memorabilia

Prime Minister hopes to use persuasion rather than the law, report Jill Sherman and Daniel McGrory

THE Prime Minister is leading a campaign against what he calls tacky and inappropriate souvenirs of Diana, Princess of Wales. However, he refuses to bow to demands from MPs for a law to prevent the Princess's name being used on memorabilia without prior consent.

Downing Street said that Tony Blair hoped "to influence public opinion" rather than call for a boycott of inappropriate material. "We cannot tell people not to buy memorabilia, but we can use public pressure."

The Diana "industry" is now reported to have produced a computer game, available on the Internet, that replicates the fatal crash in Paris. Players drive a speeding Mercedes through a tunnel while being pursued by paparazzi on motorcycles.

The Tory MP Michael Fabricant, a member of the cul-

ture, media and sport select committee, said: "That is not just tacky, as the Prime Minister said, it's beyond the bounds of good taste." He had the calls yesterday for new legislation, saying there were existing measures to prevent people from selling items with the word "royal" unless the vendors had a warrant. "You could legislate to prevent people selling items of that nature unless approved by the Princess Diana fund."

Trustees of the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund say they are close to completing their own copyright agreement to prevent unscrupulous traders from using her photograph on ashtrays, T-shirts and mugs. They will then be able to take action against those who infringe copyright.

Party leaders supported moves to stem the pirate trade. Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, said:

"People hold Princess Diana, her memory and all she stood for in tremendous respect. We must not allow this to degenerate into bad taste and cheap money-making."

Close friends of the Princess have begun their own campaign to counter the conspiracy theories surrounding her death and the increasingly lurid speculation about her relationship with Dodi Fayed. Her family, including her brother, Earl Spencer, and mother, Frances Shand Kydd, have pleaded for an end to the speculation, arguing that it is distressing her two sons, Princes William and Harry.

Downing Street said that it welcomed support from other party leaders to try to stop such speculation. John Major, the former Prime Minister, who was made a special guardian of the Princess's estate, said at the weekend: "I am sure the Princess's dearest wish would be to protect her sons from this."

William Hague, the Tory leader, said: "It is time to end all this speculation for her family's sake."

The Princess's friends decided to speak out after recent remarks by the Harrods owner, Mohamed Al Fayed, claiming that his son and the Princess were victims of a conspiracy by the British establishment to prevent them from marrying. Rosa Monckton, a long-time confidante, described Mr Al Fayed's theory that they were murdered as "cruel and farcical nonsense". She also denied that the Princess was either pregnant or planning to marry at the time she died.

She disclosed a conversation that the Princess had had with Lady Annabel Goldsmith

the day before her death, in which the Princess said: "I'm having a wonderful time, but the last thing I need is a new marriage. I need it like a bad rash on my face."

The Princess said that Mr Fayed was planning to buy her a ring, but insisted that it was not an engagement and that she would wear it on the fourth finger of her right hand.

Her friends are also supporting efforts by the memorial fund to regulate future book and video projects. Vivienne Parry, one of the trustees, said: "We cannot tell people not to buy products. What we can do is put marks on products approved by the family."

Senior figures in the fund accept they face an almost impossible task to prevent pirate traders from selling unlicensed merchandise on street markets. They could also find themselves facing long and expensive court action to defend their copyright.

The fund's copyright agreement will not affect merchandise already produced. A spokesman said: "Clearly



Memorabilia on sale in Carnaby Street yesterday. Traders say sales suggest that the public does not regard most items as distasteful.

TRIBUTE THEATRE FALLS FOUL OF RIGID FUNDING SYSTEM

By MARK HENDERSON

THE theatre group which recorded the tribute single to the Princess of Wales is facing financial problems because its refusal to label some members as "disabled" disqualifies it from claiming state grants.

It has had to scale down an innovative training scheme because it falls foul of further education funding guidelines, has postponed plans to expand nationwide and has cut back on theatre workshops for schools for lack of cash.

A theatre crafts training scheme, which began last year, has been the main casualty of inflexible fund-

ing rules. Many special-needs students who applied were turned down for grants because Chicken Shed was not a special school, and mainstream students rejected because it was not a recognised further education college.

Although it was awarded £4.6 million of lottery money to develop its theatre in Southgate, north London, annual running costs come to nearly £1 million.

John Bull, Chicken Shed's chief executive, said: "Because we have broken the mould, there is nothing there for us. It's very frustrating."

those who manufacture tacky merchandise, which has the trustees' approval, can continue. And this was never an attempt to censor newspapers and television from using the Princess's image."

Yesterday, traders, selling

director of Churchill Gifts, which has stores in Oxford Street and Shaftesbury Avenue, London, said: "When the Princess died, we destroyed all our stock at our own expense and did not sell any merchandise for many months out of

respect. We are the oldest souvenir business in London, established since 1928, with a large clientele who were asking for memorials of the Princess."

"We believe we offer tasteful and suitable products. We have made a substantial donation to the memorial fund and sold Elton John's CD *Candle in the Wind* in our stores."

His stores offer china thimbles at £1.50, china mugs at up to £4.99 and plates of various sizes that range in price from £1.69 to £18.99.

On market stalls around

London yesterday, traders were also selling T-shirts, tea towels, puzzles, framed portraits and ashtrays bearing the same picture of the Princess, wearing a tiara and a silver ballgown. Traders say there is still an insatiable demand for books and videos about the Princess.

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Rosa Monckton has rejected Mohamed Al Fayed's conspiracy theories as cruel and farcical nonsense.

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Blunkett urges ministers to unite

By JILL SHERMAN

DAVID BLUNKETT yesterday warned ministers that the whispering campaign against some colleagues, including Clare Short and Harriet Harman, risked damaging the Government.

The Education and Employment Secretary, who has taken over much of the "welfare to work" programme from Ms Harman's department, urged ministers to "pull together" rather than to undermine each other.

In the past few days Ms Short, the International Development Secretary, claimed that her Cabinet colleagues were giving briefings against her, and newspaper reports suggested that Ms Harman was on the point of being sacked from her job as Social Security Secretary. Interv-

viewed on GMTV, Mr Blunkett underlined the seriousness of the Cabinet rift. He said: "I think it damages any Government if there are whispering campaigns about key members of the administration. I think that our job is to pull together to ensure that everybody can play their part." He added: "If you are swimming together you succeed, if you don't you sink together."

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Cambridge restaurateurs, Gino and Daniella Rossi have recently switched to a new Bank of Scotland Personal Choice Mortgage. By combining their savings with the mortgage, they are benefiting from a huge saving in the interest they are paying on their mortgage.

Combining your mortgage with your savings? That might sound like an unusual concept, but consider it for a moment and you'll realise what perfect sense it makes.

Higher interest on borrowings than savings

Most of us have come to accept the fact that we pay a higher rate of interest on our borrowings than we receive for our savings.

At the moment, for example, the standard variable mortgage rate is substantially higher than what you're likely to be earning on your savings in a building society. You

may then even have to pay tax on the interest on those savings.

Save money by paying less interest

Quite simply, Personal Choice is designed to make the difference between the lending and savings rates work in your favour. It's effectively

a savings account that pays the same rate of interest as your mortgage.

Working on the principle that it is more cost effective for you to pay off debt than to save money, it follows that you will make the most of your savings by using them to reduce the interest you pay on your mortgage.

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Now this might sound like a complicated notion, but as long as the mortgage is flexible enough to give you access to your savings when you need them then, in practice, there isn't much of a difference from the way you've always done things. Except, of course, you'll have more money.

Like our friends, the Rossi family. Over the years, they had saved up £10,000 in the Building Society to help their daughter, Maria, pay her way through university.

Instant Access

When they heard about the new Bank of Scotland Personal Choice Mortgage, they were struck by the advantages and switched immediately.

In effect, they had paid off £10,000 of their mortgage overnight, but the great thing is that those savings are still available to them as soon as Maria needs them. Only last week, in fact, they wrote a cheque for £700 to pay for a deposit on her student accommodation.

So simple

"It did take me a short while to get my head round the idea of this new mortgage," admits Gino, "but the funny thing is it's actually so simple. The most amazing thing is that even though our savings are helping to keep the interest payments down on the mortgage, they are actually even more accessible than they were in the building society. We even have a cheque book that comes with the account."

So how exactly does the Personal Choice Mortgage work? As we've explained, the basic principle is that your savings are used to reduce the interest you pay on your mortgage.

Maximise your savings

When you pay in additional lump sum payments of £500 or more, interest is recalculated on the reduced mortgage balance so you make immediate interest

savings. Even with regular monthly overpayments, the balance on which interest is calculated is reduced at the end of each month. You can then access those funds any time you like by using a cheque book which is provided.

With no notice period or interest penalties, this is just as easy as withdrawing money from your old savings account. You will have exactly the same security from your savings as you would have with them in a separate account.

No tax on savings interest

If you don't need to withdraw the money, then it stays in the account working harder than ever. But, unlike a conventional savings account, you won't have to pay tax on the interest.

A Personal Choice Mortgage also gives you the flexibility to choose how much you pay monthly as a regular mortgage payment. You can opt to pay more each month or less when you need to.

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You can even choose to take a payment holiday of up to six months* or, alternatively, pay over 10 months, instead of 12 each year, giving you the chance to keep a better control over your finances at difficult times of the year such as Christmas or when you splash out for your holidays.

Although, it has to be said that the payment holiday option wasn't of great interest to Gino and Daniella Rossi at present. Not after another successful year with those spicy meatballs going down better than ever in their restaurant!

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Patients could carry tiny 'GP' in their body

By Nick Nuttall, Technology Correspondent

TINY microchips could be implanted in the body to monitor people's health and alert them to deficiencies in minerals and proteins, researchers said yesterday.

The devices, called biosensors, would screen their host's blood, fluids and bodily functions and radio the results to a home computer. The host could then be advised to eat an orange, drink a pint of milk or have a steak.

Patients with serious medical conditions, such as diabetes or a heart complaint, could set the system to dial their doctor to request an appointment. In emergencies, it could also call an ambulance, book a hospital bed, and advise the next of kin if, for example, blood-sugar levels or heart-beats become dangerously low or irregular.

Modern mobile communications technology means the devices could help to pinpoint the position of the host to ambulance staff if they collapsed in the street or crashed a car in a remote area. The

potential of the devices is outlined in a report published today by a think-tank of the Institution of Chemical Engineers.

Future Life Engineering Solutions for the Next Generation, commissioned to mark the institution's 75th anniversary, has won the backing of Tony Blair. He said: "The ideas are not science fiction. They are under active development and could feasibly be part of the longer, better quality of life and cleaner environment that we all want for the next and successive generations."

Professor John Perkins, head of the Department of Chemical Engineering at Imperial College, London, and a member of the institution's advisory panel, said yesterday that technologies were being developed that were paving the way for the implanted biosensor.

"In Japan they are developing toilets that will analyse your urine and excrement and relay the results to your doc-

tor," he said. "With advances in microanalysis, you can begin to envisage doing these kinds of things inside the body."

He said the computer technology existed to relay signals and information from an implanted device to a computer, or send it down telephone lines. The key was in miniaturising the sensors and making them sensitive enough to detect a wide range of natural substances.

Professor Perkins suggested that people could have more than one sensor implanted for different jobs. One could be in the bloodstream, another in the bladder and one in the mouth.

He said researchers in the university's medical school were looking at the links between trace chemicals in the breath and ailments such as asthma. One could be put in the brain to warn of build-ups of a substance called glutamate, which can trigger headaches and blackouts. Glutamate build-up is also linked to strokes.

One unanswered question is how the implanted biosensors would be powered. Developments in battery technology could mean that they could be remotely rechargeable, meaning the host would not have to carry a battery pack. Alternatively, tiny fuel cells could be implanted too, which could use oxygen and hydrogen from the body to generate electricity and water, which could power the biosensors.

The report also looks forward to supermarkets and corner shops having miniature food-processing plants, allowing shoppers to tailor pre-packed foods to their own tastes or avoid certain ingredients. If more foods were made on-site, it could reduce traffic and pollution.

Mind & Matter, page 15

ROSEL HAWKES at the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Philadelphia



Dr Savage-Rumbaugh believes that chimpanzees use branches to signal safe paths through the jungle

Memo to Cheetah: walk this way

CHIMPANZEES leave each other notes in the vegetation to guide them through the jungle, according to a leading expert in ape communication.

Sue Savage-Rumbaugh, who believes that the ability of apes to communicate with each other has long been underestimated, found the messages during field work in the Congo.

To help them to search for fruit and vegetables, bonobo chimps co-operate, she told the meeting. She believes that they plan their foraging trips through the forest in advance, but are forced to travel in silence because of predators. As a result, they use branches from trees to form direction posts along the route so that small parties travelling separately to the same destination do not get lost. These guides can indicate resting areas,

A TAIL WORTH REPEATING

A breed of mice which can regrow their tails when they are cut off has raised hopes for regenerating organs in human patients. The finding was made by accident. Dr Ellen Heber-Katz of the Wistar Institute in Philadelphia said. She was using the mice as a model for studying multiple sclerosis. As a means of distinguishing one

group of mice from another, she asked an assistant to pierce their ears, a standard practice in laboratories. Two weeks later she went to look at the mice and found that the ears appeared perfect. When one centimetre of the animals' tails were cut off, they regrew to three quarters of the original length.

routes to follow and places to take to the trees to avoid danger. They are left at points where trails split and an individual following might get lost without help. The cues have been used by human trackers to follow a group through the forest. "For a long time the data has

suggested that apes are capable of language skills," said Dr Savage-Rumbaugh, of the University of Georgia. But she conceded that many still argued that, although apes could recognise words, they were incapable of syntax and, therefore, of language. The recent finding by Dr

Patrick Gannon, of Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, that chimpanzees have the same asymmetry as humans in the area of the brain used for speech, has reinforced her belief that apes can communicate.

"One of the most important things I have learnt from 20 years of studying apes is that if you talk around them, they understand," she said. "Not everybody can believe that."

"If you put the human ear and the human vocal tract on a chimpanzee, he could talk, too," she said. "Linguists dismiss what apes do, saying there is no evidence. In fact, there is lots of evidence."

Dr Savage-Rumbaugh communicates with her apes by talking to them, and by allowing them to reply in "sentences" by touching a keyboard with keys carrying a series of symbols.

Bog holds 12,000 years of history

A RECORD of the history of the past 12,000 years has been found in a peat bog in Switzerland. The invention of agriculture, the settling of metals, the rise and fall of Rome, the Industrial Revolution and the dominance of the car are revealed in traces of lead at different levels.

All the lead in the bog, Etang de la Gruère in the Jura mountains, was deposited from the air, William Shotyk, of Bern University, told the meeting. No streams flow through the bog and no trees grow there.

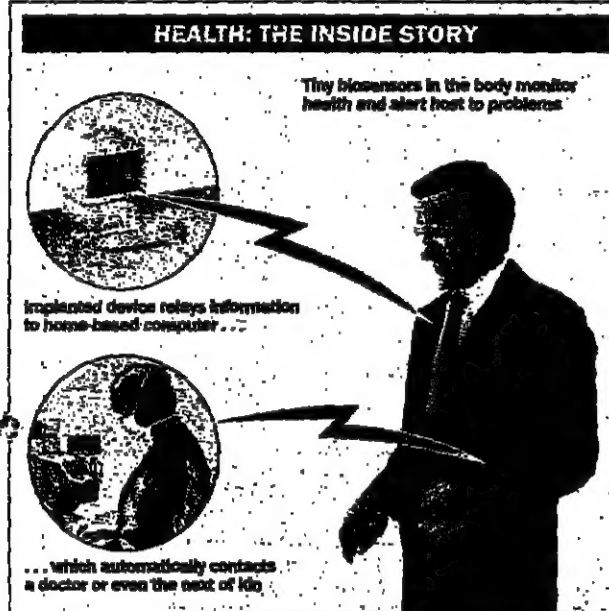
Dr Shotyk and colleagues analysed samples taken from the top to the bottom of the bog, which is about 2ft deep. The lowest lead levels were from 12,000 years ago, deposited from soil blown by the wind.

The first evidence of human intervention came 5,500 years ago, when people filled the fields, increasing wind-borne soil. A far sharper increase occurred 3,000 years ago, marking the beginning of metal smelting. The isotopes of lead changed from those in soil to those in the lead ores of Spain and Portugal, then beginning to be exploited.

The rise of Rome pushed up lead deposition to 60 times its natural level, but it fell slightly as the Roman Empire in the West collapsed. The next increase came 1,000 years ago, when silver mined in Germany was smelted.

The Industrial Revolution produced a dramatic increase, mostly from burning coal. As coal was replaced by oil this century, lead deposition declined, only to soar after leaded petrol started to be used in the late 1940s.

The peak was reached in 1979, when deposition exceeded the natural rate by 2,000 times. Since then, with the introduction of unleaded petrol, there has been a decline.



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UN pushes for compromise with Baghdad

THE United Nations Secretary-General is pushing for a compromise with Iraq that would grant special arrangements for weapons inspections in residential areas of the eight huge "presidential sites" declared off-limits by Baghdad.

The plan calls for so-called "white-glove" inspections of the living quarters of the Iraqi leadership with UN weapons inspectors being accompanied by Baghdad-based diplomats from members of the Security Council.

In return, Iraq would agree to allow inspectors from the UN Special Commission on Iraq (Unscim) unfettered access to other parts of the sprawling sites.

Kofi Annan, the UN chief, will take his proposal to the full Security Council tomorrow and travel to Baghdad this week if he receives the backing of the five permanent members of the council.

The crucial meeting takes place this evening when he confers in New York with the ambassadors of Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States, the five veto-bearing members of the Security Council.

The plan, devised by Russia and France, hinges on Washington lending its support. Russia has said informally that Iraq is ready to accept it. Even before securing American support, Mr Annan has

James Bone and Michael Theodoulou report on new hope for peace

can support, Mr Annan has dispatched a team of two Austrian surveyors and a high-ranking UN official, Steffen de Mistura, to Iraq to map out the residential sections of the "presidential sites". They arrived in Baghdad yesterday and were due to

WEAPONS INSPECTIONS

complete their task by mid-week, surveying three sites in Baghdad, three in Salah-uddin, one in Basra and one in Nineveh. Iraq says the eight sites cover a total of 26 square miles.

Under Mr Annan's plan, inspections of the living quarters would be conducted by Unscim under the supervision of diplomats from Security Council members, but would not have to take place within a certain period of time, as Baghdad has proposed.

The UN experts who arrived in Baghdad yesterday to survey the sites will be ideally placed to see the huge contrast between the lifestyles of President Saddam Hussein's pampered elite and the rest of the country's long-suffering population.

Driving to the kitsch marble palaces, where bathrooms have gold-plated taps and refrigerators are stocked with champagne and caviar, they will pass malnourished children on the streets where families are hawking their furniture and books to buy food.

Most Arab leaders have palaces at home and abroad, a tradition dating back to the early days of the Islamic empire in the 7th and 8th centuries when the Caliph wanted his own home in every province, believing that to stay in someone's else's would be undignified.

Typically, Saddam overdid it, although precisely how many palaces he owns is a matter of some dispute. Some American officials have put the figure at 170.

Grandiose building projects have always been a hallmark of Saddam's regime. Before the Gulf War he expended massive resources on a huge reproduction of Babylon, using millions of specially made bricks, each bearing the words



A UN technical team led by Steffen de Mistura arrives in Baghdad yesterday to survey eight presidential sites at the heart of the crisis

"Built in the era of Saddam Hussein", just as the ancient capital's original building materials bore the imprint of Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled in the 6th century BC.

However, some of the most ambitious projects have been launched since the Gulf War,

foremost among them the Saddam Mosque, whose foundations were laid last month as Saddam attempted to bolster his Islamic credentials. Billed as the biggest mosque in the world, it is designed to hold 45,000 worshippers.

Neither Britain nor the United States has diplomats stationed in Iraq, but they could supply officials from their embassies in neighbouring Jordan to accompany Unscim teams.

Britain has signalled its willingness to go along with the plan as long as the special

arrangements apply only to the "rooms of marble" - the real presidential palaces - within the sites. But British officials have cautioned Mr Annan against going to Baghdad without the clear prospect of a deal.

Richard Butler, the chief

UN weapons inspector, presented a similar proposal for "white-glove" inspections of presidential areas to Iraq last month. Tariq Aziz, the Deputy Prime Minister, rejected the proposal, saying they would be used by Iraq's enemies to identify bombing targets.

Wary Annan plays for high stakes

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

KOFI ANNAN'S first world crisis as Secretary-General of the United Nations has left him reflecting "Hamlet-like" on whether to go to Baghdad himself to defuse the confrontation with Iraq.

The mild-mannered Ghanaian, the first UN official to rise through the ranks to the very top, has a reputation as a cautious career diplomat who seeks to avoid conflict. Before deciding whether to make a last-ditch trip to Baghdad,

UNITED NATIONS

Mr Annan sought the guidance of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council - Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

Aides say he will travel to Baghdad only if the Big Five, who were due to meet him again last night, are in accord on what message he should deliver.

Mr Annan claims as one of his greatest achievements his "quiet diplomacy" after the

Gulf War to convince Iraq to open negotiations with the UN on an "oil for food" scheme allowing it to sell oil to raise money for humanitarian supplies for its people.

For Mr Annan, who has already been criticised for allowing President Kabila to push him around over the composition of a UN human rights investigation in the former Zaire, the showdown with Iraq has high stakes. A last-minute success would go a long way towards restoring the UN's prestige and self-confidence.



Kofi Annan: proud of his quiet diplomacy

German sect works hard to save Jews from Saddam

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN ZICHRON YAACOV

A FACTORY staffed by fundamentalist German Protestants is working overtime in this Israeli hilltop town turning out machinery to protect Jews from a possible Iraqi poison gas attack.

Far from the glare of publicity and motivated by a strict regard for the Bible and the haunting legacy of the Second World War, 150 Israel-based members of the group founded in Stuttgart in the 1950s is manufacturing air-filtration devices to render Israeli shelters resistant to germ warfare.

Since mass panic gripped Israel just over two weeks ago about the possibility of President Saddam Hussein retaliating against US airstrikes by attacking the country with chemical or biological weapons, the phone at Beth-El Industries has not stopped ringing. A special holding

ISRAEL

system has been installed and it can take potential customers up to 30 minutes to get through. "Suddenly everybody wants our devices, because they know that they have been approved by the Israeli Defence Authority as providing real protection against air pollution by nuclear, biological and chemical attacks," said the factory manager, Albrecht Fuchs.

He has been living in Israel for 23 years and claims that his mission and that of fellow members of the group is to defend the Jews of Israel from enemy attack.

Led by sisters Emma and Elsa Berger, the Germans first arrived in Zichron Yaacov, a pretty wine-producing town overlooking the Mediterranean, in the 1960s and purchased land where they now live along the extramural lines

of an old-style kibbutz. Leading an ascetic life almost completely isolated from the Jews they strive to protect, the Germans are accused by bearded ultra-Orthodox Jews, who occasionally stone them, of being missionaries using the manufacture of gas protection systems (the smallest of which costs about £1,250) as a pretext for duping the authorities.

Inside the factory, run with a Prussian-style efficiency, the Germans wear blue jumpsuits and read only the Bible and engineering textbooks; there are no newspapers, television or radio. Even the signs are in German.

"We must help to defend Israel because it says in the Bible the Messiah will save only the Jews and a small group of goyim who live peacefully among them," said a community elder, Gerhart Streiler, using the Hebrew word for non-Jews.

Jordanian airspace off limits

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL'S Defence Minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, has warned Iraq not to put his military forces "to the test", suggesting that the Israelis are prepared to go on the offensive against Baghdad.

He made the comment during a meeting of the governing right-wing Likud Party, saying that Israelis were a "peace-loving people", but the Government was prepared to "act under any circumstances to ensure peace and security" for its citizens.

As he made his threat, Jordan said it would not support any military strike against Iraq. Crown Prince Hassan said he would never allow Israeli jets to fly over his territory to attack another Arab country. It is believed that Israel would be unwilling to defy such a ban.

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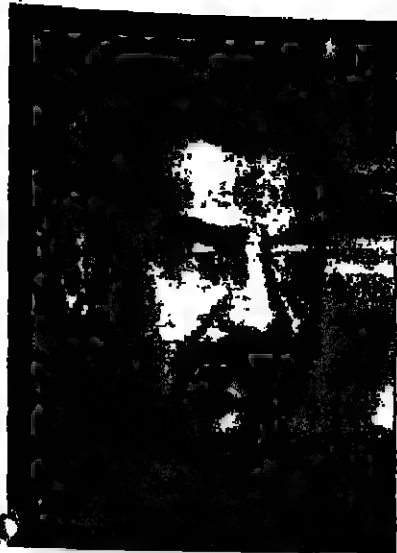
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Thinking outside the box

Brutal childhood paved way for Godfather's killing games



Saddam: first murder at 15

IF I had a time machine, I would turn the dial to an evening in 1975 in Baghdad and watch President Saddam Hussein puffing his cigar over dishes of hummus and olives as he steadily outdrank a group of drink-hardened journalists.

I was the youngest among them and did not pick up all of the clues that would have pointed to a day in February 1998, when President Clinton manoeuvred himself into the quicksands of Middle East politics. Saddam's boasts of conquests over his enemies, fuelled by bottles of Black Label whisky, have all come horribly true.

Today the West finds itself faced with a peculiar logic: no attack means a victory parade in Baghdad. Smart bombs could mark the end of the UN weapons inspectors' missions and prompt Arabs to march singing Saddam's praises, while CNN screens display burnt bodies of women and children to a world audience. If the cruise missiles spare the civilians,

Adel Darwish examines the character of the Iraqi leader, whom he met in 1975 when Saddam was already a hard-drinking murderer who demanded unquestioning loyalty

Saddam would not shy from bombing his own hospitals to create the same effect.

I could see it from my time machine 20-odd years ago, observing the poker face of Mr Deputy — as Saddam was known then — over endless rounds of whisky, boasting about putting the Kurds' orchards and villages to the torch. The man was the personification of Michael Corleone, the character played by Al Pacino in Francis Ford Coppola's film, *The Godfather*. In March 1990, Margaret Thatcher appealed to Saddam to pardon Farzad Bazoft, the *Observer* reporter who was wrongly accused of spying. "The English Prime Minister

wanted the spy," said Saddam in a speech. "She will have him all right," pausing to puff on his cigar. Then he exhorted, adding "In a box." Nine hours later, the First Secretary of the British Embassy in Baghdad was signing for the box containing the body of Bazoft, whose hanging he had to watch.

In 1975, Saddam ordered the killing of his own brother-in-law, minutes after assuring his sister that he would never make her a widow. "Once loyalty to the family and its head is in doubt, then the life of the individual concerned becomes worthless," Saddam said.

At a private screening of *The Long Days*, a film depicting his life, Saddam

lectured the selected guests. This time we sat at the end of a 30ft table as he suddenly appeared, flanked by his bodyguards at the other end after a brief blackout. Referring to his then prosperous subjects, he said: "All Iraqis are one family and I am the [god] father; any form of dissent or opposition is an act of treason."

Saddam's childhood was miserable: his stepfather was brutal and illiterate and denied him education and forced him to work as a farm-hand from the age of five. Teased about his mother's reputation, the eight-year-old Saddam learnt to walk the village dirt streets with an iron bar, making him more than a match for a boy of 16. He was barely 15 when he helped his uncle to murder a local rival, and started his own killing at the age of 19. He grew to regard killing as a normal profession. He would excuse himself in the middle of a game of dominoes, disappearing for a while, to

carry out a killing for the Baath Party, reappearing to continue the game.

By the 1980s Saddam had matured from a hired gun into a mass murderer. His gang of assassins — all thugs, psychopaths and killers from his own clan — became the core of a special security apparatus that he moulded in the 1960s along the lines of the Nazi SS. They now number more than 15,000.

Saddam, as a megalomaniac despot, sees the West's democracy as a weakness from which he gains strength. He gains from the martyrdom of his people and calculates that dead civilians or, worse, body bags coming home are too much of a gamble for Mr Clinton and Tony Blair. Saddam's gambit is that his opponents do not have the stomach to fight him to his death. He relishes the belief that he is winning this game of brinkmanship.

Adel Darwish is the author of *Unholy Babylon: The Secret History of Saddam's War*.

Fear of losing TV war hobbles the Pentagon

By BRONWEN MADDOCK
IN WASHINGTON AND
MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE American military assets deployed to the Gulf are now in place and ready for launching an attack on Iraq, should the diplomatic efforts fail to persuade President Saddam Hussein to back down over United Nations weapons inspections.

The last elements of the firepower build-up, including six more F117 Stealth fighters, arrived in Kuwait over the weekend and are now primed for action.

However, military experts in Washington claimed yesterday that the planning for an attack was clouded by indecision because of confusion over the goals and a fear of killing civilians.

The first hours of a military attack on Iraq would be almost identical to Desert Storm, the experts said. But the lack of international support for the US-British action, and the fear of losing the "propaganda war" as bodies of dead Iraqis were pulled

MILITARY STRATEGY

from the rubble in front of the world's television cameras, had hampered the Pentagon in its planning beyond the first few days.

The bombing campaign, lasting two to five days, would involve up to 300 daily sorties, a third the rate of the 1991 Gulf War, officials said. This time US commanders have only about 350 aircraft, a tenth of the force deployed seven years ago.

However, with diplomacy now approaching the final stages, it can only be a matter of days before President Clinton has to decide whether to turn to the military option.

The key assets in the American arsenal are the 1,000-mile-range Tomahawk cruise missiles, the B52 strategic bombers and laser-guided bombs including the GBU28 bunker-busting deep-penetration weapon that can pass through several layers of concrete before detonating.

The Americans also have

small bombs that can be targeted at suspected chemical and biological laboratories, creating such intense heat that they can destroy deadly toxic materials.

The main concern for the American and British pilots preparing for attacks on Iraq is that Saddam has rebuilt his country's air defence network which is now fully integrated and capable of posing a serious threat to allied aircraft, with both anti-aircraft artillery and surface-to-air missiles.

However, the first airstrikes would be aimed at reducing Iraq's air defence threat, using Harm anti-radar missiles and other weapons to suppress key air defence sites.

George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, said on BBC's *Breakfast with Frost* yesterday: "What we would do would be proportionate, and designed to reduce his [Saddam's] military capability, and especially his capability to deploy weapons of mass destruction."

Robin Renwick, page 20
Letters, page 21



ROYAL NAVY

(11 ships)

1 HMS *Portsmouth* (HQ)
1 HMS *Exeter* (C)
1 HMS *London* (C)
1 HMS *Sheffield* (C)
1 HMS *St Albans* (C)
1 HMS *St Albans* (C)
1 HMS *St Albans* (C)
1 HMS *St Albans* (C)

US NAVY IN THE GULF

(11 ships)

1 USS *Arleigh Burke* (DDG)
1 USS *Arleigh Burke* (DDG)
1 USS *Arleigh Burke* (DDG)
1 USS *Arleigh Burke* (DDG)
1 USS *Arleigh Burke* (DDG)
1 USS *Arleigh Burke* (DDG)
1 USS *Arleigh Burke* (DDG)
1 USS *Arleigh Burke* (DDG)

USS TARAWA

AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP

1 USS *Tarawa* (LHA)
1 USS *Tarawa* (LHA)
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USS GUAM

AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP

1 USS *Guam* (LHA)
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1 USS *Guam* (LHA)
1 USS *Guam* (LHA)

US MILITARY SEALIFT

COMMAND FORCES

1 USS *San Antonio* (LPD)
1 USS *San Antonio* (LPD)
1 USS *San Antonio* (LPD)
1 USS *San Antonio* (LPD)
1 USS *San Antonio* (LPD)
1 USS *San Antonio* (LPD)
1 USS *San Antonio* (LPD)
1 USS *San Antonio* (LPD)

Total US naval forces in

Arabian Gulf:

23 ships, 182 aircraft,
22,000 sailors and marines

CANADA

(1 ship)

1 HMCS *Toronto* (C)
1 HMCS *Toronto* (C)
1 HMCS *Toronto* (C)
1 HMCS *Toronto* (C)
1 HMCS *Toronto* (C)
1 HMCS *Toronto* (C)
1 HMCS *Toronto* (C)
1 HMCS *Toronto* (C)

AUSTRALIA

(1 ship)

1 HMAS *Canberra* (C)
1 HMAS *Canberra* (C)
1 HMAS *Canberra* (C)
1 HMAS *Canberra* (C)
1 HMAS *Canberra* (C)
1 HMAS *Canberra* (C)
1 HMAS *Canberra* (C)
1 HMAS *Canberra* (C)

POLAND

(1 ship)

1 ORP *Wicher* (C)
1 ORP *Wicher* (C)
1 ORP *Wicher* (C)
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MPs seek inquiry into Lord Irvine's expensive tastes

By Jill Sherman, Chief Political Correspondent

TORY MPs called yesterday for a parliamentary investigation into claims that the Lord Chancellor is to furnish his official residence with £145,000 worth of carpets, curtains and upholstery and to spend £140,000 on furniture and works of art.

John Redwood, the Shadow Industry Secretary, has called for an immediate audit of spending on official residences and other Tory backbenchers are demanding that Lord Irvine of Lairg's spending is referred to the Public Accounts Committee. The committee is entitled to investigate whether government money is being spent effectively.

The total cost of Lord Irvine's residence has been estimated at £650,000. Details of the first £330,000 have already been published, showing that £65,000 was spent on wallpaper.

But yesterday it emerged that unpublished papers held by a House of Lords committee show that Lord Irvine, who once likened himself to Cardinal Wolsey, had also ordered two beds costing £8,000, a dining table to seat ten costing £25,000 and silk upholstery costing up to £200 per metre. A carpet is said to have been ordered for an estimated £20,000, or £100 per square metre.

"Parliament should make



Irvine: he has spent £65,000 on wallpaper

inquiries into how much money is being spent and what it is being spent on, to show whether the taxpayer has got value for money." Mr Redwood said as he called for an audit of all official residences.

Mr Redwood is also demanding an inquiry into allegations that contractors carrying out the refurbishment have been asked to sign the Official Secrets Act, preventing them from giving details of the household items. He said it would be normal for contractors to agree not to reveal security arrangements, but that this should not extend to fixtures and fittings. "Of

course security information should not be divulged, but they should not be able to suppress information to the taxpayer about decorating costs."

The Lord Chancellor's Department was unable to confirm the breakdown of costs, but emphasised that all the estimates had been approved by three House of Lords committees: the administrative and works committee, the finance and staff committee and the officers committee. All three have representatives from both sides of the House of Lords and crossbenchers.

The department also pointed out that the official residence would be opened to the public on occasions and the pictures and sculptures would be on display. Charities would be able to use the rooms to host functions from March.

The curtain fabrics and upholstery are all in the style of the Victorian designer Augustus Pugin, and have been ordered from the Hummrichs Weaving Company in Essex. Three chaise longue, two wardrobes, chairs and a sideboard all in Pugin style have also been set aside for the Lord Chancellor.

Lord Irvine has already defended the work as part of a rolling ten-year programme ordered by an internal Lords committee.



Welsh beef farmers dressed as pall-bearers barracking Dr Cunningham, below, outside TV studios yesterday



Minister refuses to lie down in wake of farmers' protest

FARMERS protesting over the beef crisis booed Jack Cunningham, the Agriculture Minister, when he arrived for a television appearance yesterday.

About 70 farmers escorted a black coffin, labelled "Jack in the box", as they picketed the studios of London Weekend Television in protest at the Government's handling

of BSE. In an interview on Jonathan Dimbleby, Dr Cunningham came under renewed pressure to scrap the ban on bone-in beef. But he insisted the restriction was necessary to protect the public against the small risk of contracting new-variant CJD. He said the suggestion that the Government was running a nanny state was "a

convenient criticism of the Government which is coming from our political opponents". Scientists at Birmingham University have been given £361,000 by the Government-backed Medical Research Council to develop medication that will slow the effects of CJD and improve the quality of life for sufferers.

SNP alone to fight ban on foreign donations

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

THE Scottish National Party is to fight moves to outlaw foreign donations — the only party to do so.

With several thousand expatriate Scots worldwide and many foreign nationals claiming Scottish roots, the SNP has decided to take a hard line against the Neill inquiry into party political funding.

SNP supporters overseas contribute regularly to the party and some are clearly hoping that they might gain Scottish citizenship if Scotland ever became independent. A senior Tory source suggested last week that many foreigners might also wish to back the SNP for future influence over North Sea oil.

It also emerged last night that the SNP was one of three parties which have failed to meet the deadline to provide details of party political donations over the past five years. The others are Sinn Féin and the Democratic Unionist parties, which were unavailable for comment last night.

Lord Neill, QC, the public standards watchdog, asked all parties to make their submissions by January 31 and to include a breakdown of sums received from overseas. Other detailed views on the future of party funding are to be submitted by the end of this month. But feelings in the SNP have been running so high that last week its treasurer, Kenny MacAskill, informed the inquiry that the party would not be providing details of donations.

The SNP reaction so alarmed officials that they prepared a brief for Lord Neill on his return at the weekend from visits to Germany and Sweden, where he was studying state funding of parties. There was particular concern because Lord Neill's committee is an advisory body and cannot legally force parties to cooperate.

Mr MacAskill was not available for comment last night. However, it appeared likely last night that he had misunderstood the SNP response to the inquiry. Mike Russell, the party's chief executive, said last night that the SNP hoped to provide all details of donations by the end of this week. It would also apologise to Lord Neill for the delay.

However, Mr Russell accepted that Mr MacAskill was abreast of the strong feelings in the party on the subject of the inquiry. Mr Russell said last night: "We really believe this whole problem is one for the Tories and Labour and it has nothing to do with the SNP."

Blair recruits Treasury insider to the No 10 team

Gordon Brown's chaps think he's their mole in Downing Street. Valerie Elliott is not so sure

SUSPICIONS that the Prime Minister wants more control over Gordon Brown after his ups in their relationship have been increased by the arrival at No 10 of one of the Treasury's highest fliers.

Jeremy Heywood, who is in his mid-thirties, has a First from Hertford College, Oxford, and was dubbed "the real Chancellor" when he served under Norman Lamont, is giving Mr

Blair expert guidance on goings-on at the Treasury in his role as private secretary in charge of the economic and domestic brief.

Mr Blair was not happy with the way Mr Brown handled the row over lone-parent benefits, the announcement of policy on the single currency, and the introduction of new savings accounts.

Mr Heywood's expertise, it

is argued, will ensure that the vital relationship between No 10 and No 11 will work more smoothly. It is even said that Mr Heywood, with his knowledge of what is going on at the Treasury, will act as Mr Blair's eyes and ears. He could turn out to be for Mr Blair what the economist Sir Alan Walters was for Margaret Thatcher.

They tell a different story in

the Treasury. There, they describe the slim, trendy, workaholic as "our man in No 10". Indeed, someone in Mr Heywood's position would expect, after a period working for the Prime Minister, to return to the Treasury in a very senior role.

Mr Blair, however, is deeply impressed by Mr Heywood and is promoting him at No 10. He is soon to become

the Prime Minister's Principal Private Secretary, which will give him vast influence across government. He will work with Jonathan Powell, the Downing Street chief of staff, but will be a key link with senior officials in all departments. His duties will include liaison with the opposition parties, and Buckingham Palace.

It is understood that he will take on the wider duties when John Holmes, who is seconded to the Foreign Office to No 10 as Principal Private Secretary, takes up his next posting abroad.

Senior officials are delighted with the appointment, which was agreed with Lord Butler, the recently retired Cabinet Secretary, and believe it shows "quiet recognition" from Mr Blair that he needs a substantial Treasury civil servant and policy-fixer. It is said by officials that,



Background figure: Jeremy Heywood with Hague and Lamont outside the Treasury in 1992

had such a man with "instinctive Whitehall nous" been there in the autumn, Mr Blair would never have been involved in meeting Bernie Ecclestone, the Formula One chief, and a million-pound donor to the Labour Party, or

so directly caught up in the controversy over exempting Formula One from tobacco sponsorship. One official said of Mr Heywood: "He will become very powerful and relied on by Mr Blair to be the wise head."

Relatives of dead fans ready to sue police

By Jill Sherman

THE families of football fans who died in the Hillsborough disaster said yesterday that they would take out a private prosecution against police officers in charge at the ground if Jack Straw ruled out a fresh public inquiry this week.

The Home Secretary will make a Commons statement on Wednesday in response to an investigation by Lord Justice Stuart-Smith into further evidence surrounding the 1989 tragedy, which claimed 96 lives. But Mr Straw is expected to tell MPs that the investigation, which includes new video and medical evidence, sheds little further light on events and does not warrant a new public inquiry.

The 1989 Taylor report blamed the "failure of police control", but an attempt to bring disciplinary action against two senior officers was dropped and the inquest returned a verdict of accidental death. Yesterday members of the Family Support Group alleged that their evidence showed police officers had lied to try to escape blame.

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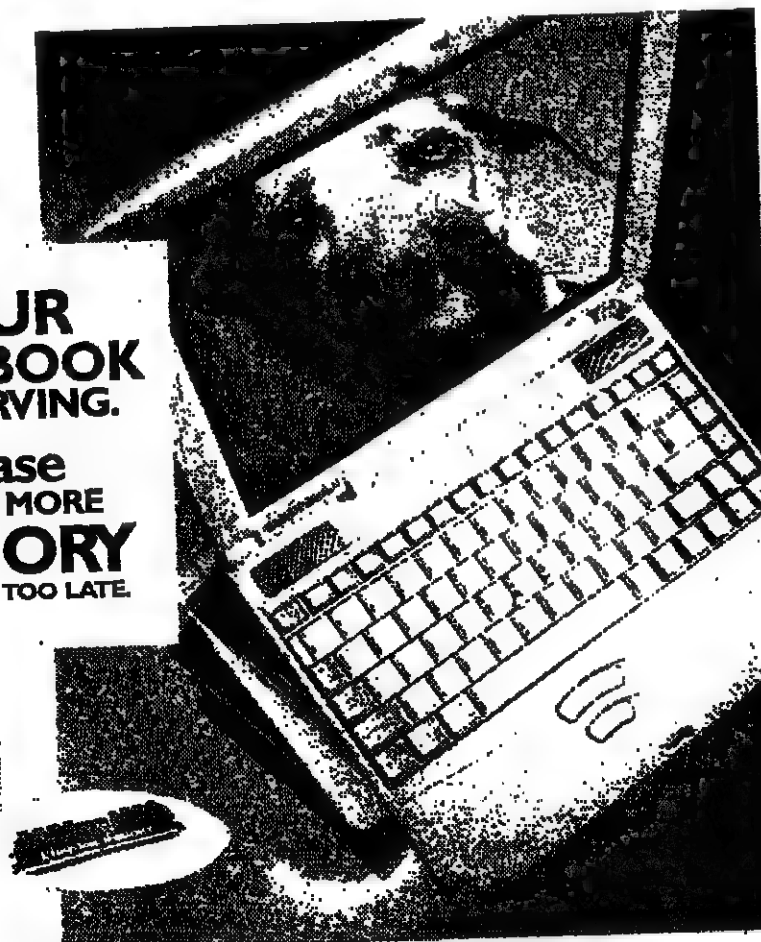
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The City gives Kohl freedom to bridge chasm of misunderstanding

Conversation between the English and the Germans is rarely spiced with controversy. There is a courtly avoidance of polemic, we agree that the French are impossible, that the world is too closed and too dumb and, retaining our composure, we sometimes agree to disagree.

How deep though is our mutual understanding? Austen Chamberlain advised that with the French you begin by disagreeing and then find much in common; with the Germans initial contact is benign but one quickly strays into the undergrowth: com-

INSIDE GERMANY



BY ROGER BOYES

munication becomes tangled, the substance elusive. Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, will unwittingly

reinforce this view when he comes to London this week. He is being awarded the freedom of the City and will use the occasion to urge Britain to jump on the euro train (I picture the scene as a hobnob, a bottle of meads in one pocket, making a stumbling run for the last carriage).

The Chancellor likes the City, and not only because his son works there. It is the City, he tells anyone who will listen, that will deliver Britain. Federalist phrases have been banished at least from the early draft of the *Grundgesetz* and he sets out the pragmatic, mercantil-

ist case for Europe. Herr Kohl is ready to sell Europe to Britain on British terms. Then he has to go home and work out how to sell Europe to German voters. Salesmanship, in other words, has replaced the grand shining dreams. The idea that a bridge could be built between the British and German concepts of Europe has long since been abandoned.

Mitsuko Uchida, the Japanese pianist and a shrewd observer of the Bonn scene, thinks it was ever thus: the British and the Germans are chalk and cheese, she writes in the current issue of *Pros-*

pect magazine. There was never any chance that we would agree. The British are seafarers, the Germans are forest-dwellers. The British crave risk, the Germans security (the latest election poster has a picture of the Chancellor and the slogan: *Today Secure the Future*, which links an implicit call for present sacrifice with fear of tomorrow).

Ms Uchida is too elegant a writer to compile checklists, so, distilling her wisdom, I will do so on her behalf. A sketchy catalogue of contrast-

ing national characteristics and characters would look something like this:

British: Admirals, creative disorder, financiers, Jane Austen, the bookie, pragmatists, optimists.

German: Generals, Keep off the Grass, engineers, Thomas Mann, the insurance rep, idealists, pessimists.

Naturally Britain has had talented generals; naturally North Germans have a seafaring tradition, but the stereotypes broadly hold. If Ms Uchida were a diplomat, she would be regarded as a

heretic. It is deemed incorrect to talk of European peoples as being fundamentally different. In modern diplomacy all differences are supposed to be relative.

British policy in Europe is to loosen the Franco-German axis by developing strong separate relationships with Paris and Bonn. If we really inhabit different philosophical planets — and I'm coming round to the Uchida view — then Britain and Germany have to develop a different form of discourse. There is no point in talking in European councils about dramatic new Anglo-German initiatives on

deregulation when Bonn simply means that it intends to keep its shops open until four o'clock on Saturday afternoons. That is how a relationship — and language — becomes debased.

I can think of a dozen ways of giving flesh to our relations. Why not set up an Anglo-German know-how fund for Central Europe? Why not jointly prepare Eastern candidates for the European Union? But please, no more interplanetary talking shops in which our differences are either camouflaged or caricatured.

Red rose ousts the hammer and sickle

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

ITALY'S former Communists have dropped the hammer and sickle emblem, the last vestige of their former link to the now defunct Soviet Union.

The Italian Communist Party (PCI) transformed itself into the social democratic Party of the Democratic Left (PDS), after the fall of the Berlin Wall eight years ago, and adopted the oak tree as its new symbol. But it kept the hammer and sickle in a corner of the party flag, even after winning the 1994 elections as the core of the Olive Tree Centre-Left coalition led by Professor Romano Prodi.

To the strains of Sting and Peter Gabriel, rather than the Internationale, Massimo D'Alema, the PDS leader, announced that the hammer and sickle would give way to a Labour Party-style red rose alongside the oak tree.

Signor D'Alema who was addressing a three-day conference of Italian left-wing parties which ended at the weekend in Florence, indicated that he hoped the PDS would absorb groups which once belonged to the Italian Socialist Party (PSI), which was once led by Bettino Craxi, the now disgraced and exiled former Italian Prime Minister.

Some PDS leaders, however, including Walter Veltroni, the Deputy Prime Minister, believe the PDS should instead be seeking a merger with the left of the former Christian Democrats, which is also part of the Olive Tree coalition.

Signor D'Alema's ultimate aim is said to be the creation of a homogeneous left-wing party, akin to the British Labour Party, to complete the realignment which followed the collapse of the Christian Democrats in a welter of corruption scandals in 1992.

Aid agencies say Cook arms code is sham

ROBIN COOK'S vaunted new ethical common arms export policy has been denounced as a hollow sham by Britain's leading aid agencies on the eve of its presentation to Britain's European partners.

The proposed European Code of Conduct on the arms trade, which the Government has billed as a major achievement of its European Union presidency, is inadequate, contains serious loopholes and falls short of its aim of setting high common standards governing arms exports, according to Oxfam, Amnesty International, Saferworld and the British American Security Information Council. The agencies, which have published a leaked copy of the proposed code, list five serious shortcomings which they say will make it ineffective. These are:

□ That the human rights guidelines would allow exports of repressive equipment, even to repressive regimes, if it is for the protection of security forces.

□ There is a complete absence of any provision for parliamentary scrutiny and transparency.

□ The proposed guidelines will allow one EU country to undercut the export bid of another virtually in secret without the knowledge of most other EU members.

□ There is no common "end-user" system to prevent exports being diverted to war zones.

□ There is nothing to stop arms brokering, such as that carried out by British and French companies that contributed to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

The code, based on the new criteria for arms exports that Labour announced in July,

Proposed rules of export under fire from lobby groups, writes Michael Binyon

will be discussed for the first time by EU governments in Brussels tomorrow.

The four agencies, which lobbied Labour to introduce the code, say that the guidelines governing human rights, development and regional security are not tough enough.

They say that the British guidelines have still allowed 22 new export licences to be granted to Indonesia for equipment including bombs, ammunition and surveillance equipment. In addition, 86 licences have been approved to Turkey for weapons which include snipers' rifles, mortars and armoured vehicles.

"Unless the loopholes are closed and extra measures like increased parliamentary scrutiny

are added, the code will not be effective," said Paul Eavis, director of Saferworld, a lobbying group for international security. He called on EU governments to act now to make the code something of which the British presidency could be proud.

Septics forecast months ago that it would be difficult to encourage all governments to enforce restrictions on the export of arms and ammunition, and even more difficult to stop one country taking a contract that had been refused a licence in another.

The proposed declaration commits EU states to the "maintenance of a strong defence industry", saying that exports can contribute to collective security. All EU states agree to circulate among each other the details of licences refused, but the decision to turn down the transfer of any item will remain at the national discretion of each member state. They would keep such refusals and consultations confidential.

A licence should be refused if it is inconsistent with any international arms embargo; if it runs counter to nuclear, biological and chemical weapons conventions or regimes controlling missile technology; and if it contravenes the ban on anti-personnel landmines.

States will make no account respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in recipient countries, and will not issue a licence if there is a "clearly identifiable risk" that the proposed export might be used for internal repression.

EU countries would also not allow exports that would prolong existing conflict or be used other than for legitimate defence and security needs.

Italy's alert over Aids prostitute

BY RICHARD OWEN

A PROSTITUTE who offered unprotected sex to clients in resorts on the Adriatic Riviera knew she was dying of Aids, and may have deliberately infected numerous clients over the past two years, Italian police said yesterday.

Police said they believed as many as 5,000 men and women needed to undergo health checks and named the prostitute as Giuseppina Barbieri, 49, a resident of Lido di Dante, a seaside resort near Ravenna.

Police said Signora Barbieri, who is now in hospital under police guard, had continued to offer sex to customers after she was declared HIV positive in November 1996. Aids was later diagnosed. Vittorio Vicini, the Ravenna public prosecutor, said revenge could not be ruled out as a motive.

Police said the woman had attracted clients by letting it be known that she was willing to offer sex without condoms. She and her partner, Fernando Pognani, 58, had organised orgies at their rundown villa. Signor Pognani has been arrested for "knowingly helping to spread an epidemic", a criminal offence in Italy.



A hunter with a live potential target on his hat joins the Paris demonstration to save the sport. Several thousand hunters from all over the country took part.

French hunters target minister

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A PACK of hounds, a single wild boar and 150,000 hunters converged on Paris at the weekend to protest over European Union regulations limiting the wildfowl hunting season in France.

The demonstration, the largest for many years, was a vivid display of clout by the powerful French hunting lobby before regional elections next month. The lone boar, a now called Madama, looked understandably nervous at the head of the four-mile unbroken procession of hunters, determined to protect their right to kill her and almost every other species of wild animal.

French hunters are up in arms over EU legislation aimed at protecting migratory birds, such as geese and ducks, during breeding periods by limiting the hunting season. In France, the season ended this year on January 31, a month earlier than usual, and will resume in September rather than July.

The demonstrators also declared "open season" on Dominique Voynet, the French Environment Minister and head of the Green Party. An outspoken conservationist and pro-European, Mme Voynet has vowed to extend wildlife preserves and use EU legislation to restrict traditional rights to pursue game over private property.

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ZURICH MUNICIPAL

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Rainmaker with his head in the clouds

Critics dismissed Graeme Mather's attempts to make clouds rain. But now recent experiments appear to have vindicated him. Anjana Ahuja reports

Dr Graeme Mather lived his life with his head in the clouds. Against the advice of almost everybody else in the meteorological community, the Canadian scientist devoted his professional life to trying to make clouds rain. In the 1970s, he took money from a tobacco co-operative in South Africa to set up his first project. "In a way, the apartheid years were good for us because people left us alone with our heresy experiment," Dr Mather reflected, just months before his death. As a *Horizon* documentary reveals this week, experiments around the world appear to prove his faith was justified.



Dr Mather: maverick

Before Dr Mather became involved, the science of weather modification had already claimed many reputations. The idea that clouds could be manipulated first circulated in the 1940s, and efforts gathered pace soon after the Second World War.

Weather experts fired rockets into clouds to stop them producing hail, which damages crops. The clouds, it was hoped, would dissolve into a harmless shower. However, the entire discipline fell into disrepute when commercial companies hijacked the idea, took it around the world, and then failed to deliver on their promises. Cloud-seeding, as the process was known, became the preserve of crackpots and charlatans.

Dr Mather refused to be daunted. After all, the principle seemed perfectly plausible. Water droplets are swept up to the top of the clouds on updrafts, where they become supercooled (ie, although the temperature is below freezing, the water remains liquid). When a supercooled droplet collides with an ice crystal it freezes on contact and sticks. Successive collisions cause each ice crystal to accumulate more water droplets; the crystals

grow until they become too heavy to remain suspended in the atmosphere. As the crystals fall through the cloud, they become raindrops.

The ice crystals therefore act as frames to "grow" raindrops. Scientists theorised that if they could inject the cloud with similarly shaped crystals, these imposter crystals would also act as frames around which droplets would clump. The cloud would then be tricked into raining. Silver iodide, whose crystals resemble those of ice, seemed the best bet.

Sadly, none of the experiments, including Dr Mather's South African project, which had been going for more than five years, seemed to work.

Dr Mather was about to admit defeat when serendipity intervened. He and a colleague decided to collect a last batch of data when they flew into a tiny but ferocious storm. That storm, Dr Mather says in the film, changed his life. Huge droplets were

spattering on the tiny plane's windshield. No such storm had been forecast. Back on the ground, they discovered the storm was located directly above a paper mill.

Dr Mather was convinced that something that the mill was spewing into the atmosphere was encouraging the downpour. Subsequent experiments confirmed that hygroscopic salts pouring into the sky from the paper mill were responsible. Hygroscopic salts attract water — once in the atmosphere, the particles act as magnets around which raindrops can form.

The scientific community remained sniffy. Foremost among the sceptics was Dr William Cooper, of the United States National Centre for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colorado. Dr Cooper, regarded as one of the world's finest cloud scientists, saw Dr Mather present his astonishing claims at a cloud physics confer-



The idea of making clouds rain fell into disrepute when it was hijacked by commercial companies and the process became the preserve of crackpots and charlatans

ence in Montreal in 1982. Dr Cooper was wary; Dr Mather was known to be a smooth-talking salesman.

"He was charming and charismatic, and many scientists don't trust that," Dr Cooper says. "He was also not well-published because he had been working in the commercial sector. Overall, he was regarded as a maverick. At the conference he presented results that I was convinced were impossible. Yet the statistical evidence was overwhelming, which I couldn't understand."

Dr Cooper arranged to fly to South Africa "with the full intention of explaining what was wrong with the experiment". Instead, he came back convinced that Dr Mather was on to something. NCAR is now running two experiments, one in Arizona and one in northern Mexico, to try to verify the South African results. The experiments use potassium chloride, which is similar to table salt (sodium chloride) and, it is claimed, non-polluting.

The trial in Mexico has been running for two years, and according to Dr Roelof Bruijntjes, who is

heading the experiments, the signs are promising. "We were sufficiently encouraged in the first year to continue the seeding research. But the results are preliminary, because we have only a very small sample of clouds at the moment. We need to work over two more summers to reach a proper conclusion."

"If the South African results can be reproduced, it will be the most exciting thing to have happened in the field for 20 years. It will be remarkable because some of the results are not scientifically ex-

plainable," Dr Bruijntjes adds, however, that scientists must exercise caution because cloud-seeding is still mired in controversy. He also points out that, with water being such a precious resource, success will push the research into the political arena. More than a quarter of the world's population lives in areas prone to drought, and many countries would want to put the idea into practice.

Dr Mather died last year, aged 63, from leukaemia, shortly before the documentary, produced and directed by Adam Bullmore and

Denman Rooke, was completed. The programme will ensure that this smooth-talking maverick is given the recognition he deserves.

Dr Cooper says: "With the paper mill, he saw something that other people wouldn't have seen. I am still uncomfortable with his idea because it throws up major puzzles in cloud physics. But if Dr Mather is right, it will demonstrate that humans can change clouds in ways that were once thought impossible."

● *Horizon: The Rainmaker* is on Thursday on BBC2 at 9.30pm.

More fish please, Jeeves

JEEVES, the perfect valet created by P.G. Wodehouse, always argued that fish was the best food for the brain. He may have been on to something, if a new analysis in the *British Journal of Nutrition* is to be believed. Three scientists, including Dr Michael Crawford, of the University of North London, argue that it was the ready availability of fish and shellfish in the lakes of the Rift Valley in Africa that made the evolution of the human brain possible.

In just a few million years, brain volumes more than

tripled, from the meagre 384ml of *Australopithecus afarensis* to the whopping 1,250ml of Homo sapiens. A few million years may seem a long time, but in evolutionary terms it is not. Many explanations have been advanced for the explosive growth of the brain, involving genetic, climatic and environmental factors, but Dr Crawford and his co-authors, Dr Stephen

Cunnane and Dr C. Leigh Broadhurst, find them unsatisfactory. They point out that the brain consists largely of long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids. Among the most important are arachidonic acid (AA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), which can be synthesised from other fatty acids, but only slowly. The evidence is that for optimum

brain growth in babies, a good supply of both AA and DHA in food is essential. They are present in breast milk, though not in all powdered formulae.

It so happens that tropical fish and shellfish are an especially abundant source of both these brain foods. Indeed, says the team, their composition comes closer to that of the brain than any other food source known. The fish, found in large quantities in the Rift Valley lakes around which man evolved, also provide plenty of protein. The problem is that fishing tackle in the form of harpoons or fish-hooks only appeared 18,000 years ago, long after the transition to a bigger brain had already taken place.

But this is not an insuperable obstacle. The team argues that grabbing or trapping fish, or collecting shellfish by hand, may have long predated sophisticated fishing. It would be a lot

simpler than hunting or scavenging game, and yield far greater amounts of AA and DHA for the same effort. They do not argue that eating fish was sufficient to cause the increase in brain size, but they suggest it was necessary. "Did hominids become intelligent enough to begin fishing, or did they fish and then become intelligent?" they ask. "Since these two are not mutually exclusive, the answer is likely to lie between."

If it is true that we owe our brains to eating fish, there are implications for today's diets, because there is evidence, the team says, that lack of abundant AA and DHA in the womb and in infancy leads to lower IQs. "We are not so far removed from our palaeolithic ancestors that we can expect our present agricultural, processed food-based diet to provide indefinitely for our continued intellectual development," they conclude. Bring on the fish, Jeeves.



SCIENCE BRIEFING
Nigel Hawkes

THE slow growth of lichens on fresh falls of rock has provided a new method for dating earthquakes. Surprising as it may seem, the method has identified past earthquakes that other techniques had missed, according to its originators, Professor William Bull, of the University of Arizona, and Dr Mark Brandon, of Yale.

The usual method for dating ancient earthquakes is to look for disturbances in the

Lichens used to date earthquakes

layers of earth, and then to carbon-date organic matter — fallen trees, for example — lying immediately above the disturbance. Eight years ago, Professor Bull began wondering if lichen growth might provide a more reliable clock. Typically, a lichen in the area around the San Andreas fault in California will grow at

three eighths of an inch a century. Rock first exposed to the air by an earthquake 1,000 years ago would be dotted with lichens averaging about 34in across. In the South Island of New Zealand, where conditions are wetter, growth is about 50 per cent faster.

Results suggest that in both areas, earthquakes have been more frequent than previously supposed. In New Zealand, big earthquakes occur about every 260 years, the lichen shows. The most recent was 248 years ago, so it seems possible that another is due.

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Whales cool on global warming

A NEW experiment has produced striking results, but may yet fall foul of campaigners who say it is making life too noisy for whales. The Acoustic Thermometry of Ocean Climate (Atoc) project involves making very loud noises underwater off the California coast, and detecting them 5,000 miles away on Christmas Island in the Pacific.

Since the speed of sound in water depends on temperature, the time taken for the sound to cover 5,000 miles — about an hour — is a way of measuring how warm the water is. Proving that global warming is actually occurring is difficult, but Atoc could do it. Results of the first 15 months, reported recently at an American Geophysical Union meeting, show that the spikes of sound can be timed to within 20 milliseconds, which means they can read the average temperature of the ocean to within six thousandths of a degree.

Within a decade that would be precise enough to detect the predicted global warming trend. Although no ill-effects on whales have been demonstrated, the permit for the experiment expires in August.

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LEFT: pale grey stretch
three-button jacket, £286,
and matching trousers,
£175. White slash-neck
jumper, £115.
CENTRE: cherry-print
spaghetti-strap dress, £185.
RIGHT: beaded dress in
antique pink lace, £702,
worn over a pale pink silk
slip dress, £95. Necklace,
£90, by Detail, 4a Symonds
St. London SW3 (0171-730
8488). Pink suede strappy
leather heels, £210, by
Jimmy Choo, 20 Motcombe
St. SW1 (0171-235 6008).

All clothes are from Elspeth
Gibson's spring/summer
collection at A La Mode,
Hens Crescent, London
SW1, and Tokyo, 309
Brompton Rd, SW3. National
Inquiries: 0171-581 0773.
Photographer: RYAN SULLIVAN
Stylist: Deborah Bratt
Hair: Raphael Salfay at
Michael Johnson Management
Make-up: Jochen Fuchs at
Michael Johnson Management
Model: Jinsley at Elite

Fashion's best-kept secret

Elspeth Gibson, the insider's favourite designer, is going public with her first London catwalk show. Style Editor Grace Bradberry reports on her much talked about debut

Elspeth Gibson's studio would surprise the soigné New Yorkers who buy her designs at Barneys. In that most chic of department stores, all is minimal and monochrome. Chez Gibson is a different story. The maisonette in Highgate still serves as marital home and workspace, and the cleaner can barely pick her way between mannequins and rolls of fabric. A tiny black and gold beaded dress hangs in the hallway. When Gibson poses for pictures at her cutting table, her assistant, Amy, has to move into the kitchen. Yet in these domestic surroundings a collection destined to be one of the most talked about of London Fashion Week has been born. Elspeth Gibson is unusual among high-profile London designers in that she has never staged a show. While others rush for the catwalk the minute they leave college — Alexander McQueen made his name through shows, Tristan Webber shows for the second time next week, despite graduating only in March — Gibson, 34, established her own company in 1994. Her first order, for a dozen dresses, came from Liberty and her reputation, and collection, have grown ever since. Last year, Alexandra Shulman, the Editor of British Vogue, pronounced that Gibson had created "the perfect skirt", a design that seemed "to strike the right balance: looking modern and different without being too extreme". The Financial Times compared Gibson with Prada. She finds this "very flattering" but does not take it altogether seriously. Nevertheless, her fans include Cher, Saffron Aldridge, Helena Christensen, Helena Bonham Carter and the singer Dina Carroll.

Gibson herself has described her designs, often embroidered and beaded, as "pretty". But they reflect the designer's character in that they are, on the one hand, all sweetness and light but, on the other, hard-edged with sharp silhouettes. Despite the frequent giggles and wide smile, Gibson is fiercely ambitious. Asked why she wants to show when her reputation is already strong, she muses: "Am I established? I don't know. I want to go all the way with this. I'd like to be an international designer. This is the next step." Later she mentions T-shirts, perfumes — a whole merchandising bonanza that may lie in the future. Her show will not be held in the tents outside the Natural History Museum but in the ultra-chic surroundings of Nobu, the fashion pack's favourite London restaurant. "I thought about the Pharmacy — my husband, Dominic, is a

Dorbenhams readily agreed to sponsor her show. In fact, Gibson knows more than most designers about the mass market. After a three-year course at Nottingham College of Art and Design, she did a stint at Zandra Rhodes, then worked for several high street labels, including Moncler. "When I finally did start my own company, I had a standard to which the difficulties against. I knew that creativity was only a small part of the business." Her parents have been hugely supportive. She grew up in Nottingham, where her father worked as an architect and her mother in the graphics department of Rolls-Royce. They gave her a strong sense of that, yes, life was difficult, but one had to get on with the business of it.

She said: "During one of my first jobs, I remember phoning up my father in tears and saying 'It's such hard work. They want me to do this and that'. He said 'You can't run away because things are difficult, you have to confront it'. After that conversation, I decided to knuckle down and get on with it. Amid the slog, however, there is now time to enjoy the experience of design. She relishes her twice-yearly visits to Premier Vision, in Paris, where she selects her luxury fabrics. "I'm like a child in a sweet shop," she confesses. "I will fall in love with fabrics; then realise afterwards that I can't do anything with them, or they can't be washed, cleaned, whatever." Some of the plain fabrics then go to Parisian embroiderers to be decorated. She begins sketching only once she has the cloth in her workroom. Her clothes may sound like the kind of pieces one scarcely dares to wear, but Gibson is adamant that they should be a source of pleasure. When she got married in 1996, she leapt into the swimming pool in her wedding dress. "It was such a hot weekend, we were all having so much fun. I thought 'I'm not going to wear it again'."

She took it to her dry-cleaner, who was appalled. "It came back two sizes smaller, which is great because when I'm older I'll be able to get the dress out and say 'Look, this is how small I was'. It's got the antique look about it now," she says, and giggles.



Gibson: "I'm like a child in a sweet shop"

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'I was sure we'd die, but Justin kept me going'

Frozen and terrified in a Himalayan blizzard, Paula Macklin and Justin Creasy not only survived, but found love. Interview by Bill Frost

Huddled together for warmth as a blizzard howled around them, Paula Macklin and Justin Creasy thought they were going to die on the slopes of Thorong La, a 20,000ft Himalayan peak. As darkness fell on New Year's Eve, the temperature dropped to -40C and Paula was hallucinating. Despite all the planning that had gone into their two-week trek on the Annapurna Circuit, their guide had got the party lost, and as night closed in they were left with no shelter, no fuel and no water. With their guide and porter, the couple huddled beneath the side of a large rock after wandering blindly in the blizzard for hours.

"I was hallucinating badly by then, and had been screaming for Justin. The wind was howling like a demon and my left foot was frozen solid," says Paula, 30, an acupuncturist from Henfield in West Sussex. "I was shivering and in a state. My boots were frozen and wouldn't come off my feet. As Justin pulled, I screamed, and as he peeled my socks off, I saw toes that didn't look like my own, all swollen and blue — it was frostbite and I kept thinking I may lose them all."

What makes the story of Paula and Justin's survival even more remarkable is that although they had been friends for eight years, they had never become an item. Would New Year's Eve at 20,000ft mark the beginning of a shift in their relationship? As Justin says now: "During that journey I really began to

believe we might lose someone. I was just determined it was not going to be her — she is priority number one."

He blushes slightly but Paula takes his unequivocal admission in her stride and returns to the vivid hallucinations she experienced on the mountain. "I felt the presence of my dead mother very strongly at one point, but that was comforting — I didn't think it was a prelude to death," she says.

"My mind was racing. I couldn't work out why things had gone so badly wrong. How could the guide lose his way?"

"I kept thinking it must be a film because I had led a charmed life. I was sure I was not meant to die on a mountain in the Himalayas."

I had to survive for so many reasons, among them the support needed by my twin sister, who is having chemotherapy. I thought of my mother and all the people I cared about and who cared about me."

Paula and Justin had become severely dehydrated — the water they had brought had frozen and their guide had forgotten to bring fuel for the camping stove. The party was also suffering from exposure. "We tried to drink snow but it stuck to our lips because they were so chapped. I was acting from head to foot, feeling sick and scared. I did not know how Justin and I would survive. The party managed to sleep for about an hour. Dawn brought no comfort. The bright sunshine showed



Love in a cold climate: the desperate hours when they were lost on Thorong La in the Himalayas "crystallised something" for Paula Macklin and Justin Creasy

no sign of civilisation in the valley far below, just snow and boulders as far as the eye could see.

"Justin showed his true qualities then," says Paula. "He was always there, pushing me on but not making me feel inadequate. Sometimes I would look back and see him crashed out in the snow, desperate for water. But he just kept on going — how, I do not know."

"After what we had already endured — the worst weather on the mountain for 20 years, we discovered later — the temptation was to lie down in the snow, stop where we were and sleep. It looks so tempting, but Justin made sure that did not happen."

"All the landmarks had been obliterated by the blizzard," recalls Justin. "I had hoped we just had about three hours walking before we reached civilisation that morning. In fact, it was seven of the harshest hours I have ever endured before we finally came upon a mountain village where we were able to recuperate."

"There was no food, no water and I was worried about Paula's feet. She was in some pain, and so was the guide, who also suffered frostbite."

"I felt OK, just bloody cold and tired. But Paula's mouth was so dry she could not speak or swallow."

Remembering their terror, six weeks on, they cling together again on a large armchair. Justin's arm protectively across Paula's shoulders, their bodies as close as they were on Thorong La.

"Something happened that night to bind us closer together," says Paula. "I really thought we might die, two trekkers lost in the snow and bitter cold. I felt such respect and affection for Justin."

You have the feeling that Paula has always been certain of his devotion and it is only now, after their brush with death, that he dares hope that his feelings are reciprocated.

Justin, who describes his first meeting with Paula in 1990 as "like all my Christmases coming at once", blushes again when asked about his feelings after their ordeal on the icy Himalayan peak.

he says, studiously avoiding Paula's eyes. "It won't be the Alps, or anywhere near a snowflake."

"I have been travelling the world on and off for eight years and am now in a position to settle down. I moved to Sussex from East Anglia to be closer to Paula because her life had settled down, too, after a couple of previous relationships."

His hand tightens on her shoulder and they smile at each other. "No one has asked me to get married yet, but Justin has been so sweet — champagne, red roses, making a fuss of me," says Paula.

When she leaves the room to treat a patient, Justin, a 30-year-old agricultural adviser and former farm manager, admits he is "head over heels" and that those desperate hours on Thorong La "crystallised something" for them both. His expression when she returns is further evidence, if any were needed, that he is at least in certain of his feelings.

"I met her first eight years ago when I was travelling in Malawi. I got on a bus one day and saw this

beautiful blonde with a baby on her lap — not hers, I hasten to add.

"It was chaos — chickens squawking, children crying and adults talking at the top of their voices. All I could see, though, was her. I struck up a conversation and we got on straight away, travelling together for the next six weeks. I remember particularly our stay in Zanzibar."

They remained in contact after returning to Britain but she was involved in another relationship. When that ended with the death of her then boyfriend from stomach cancer, he moved from his home in Suffolk to Sussex to be nearer to her.

As Paula leaves the room once more to check on a patient, he admits he is smitten — "was since the first meeting" — but is far too shy to discuss whether she loves him too. "I must be off now or I will be late," he says.

So what are her feelings after that dreadful night? "He showed good leadership skills, practicality and great strength of character," she says. But does she know he is "head over heels in love with her"? Paula grins: "Of course I do."

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Opera, a nice little earner?

It can be done, says the man behind the Albert Hall's new *Madam Butterfly*. Richard Morrison reports

So it's gloom all over the concert and opera world? Not quite. There is one corner of musical England that is forever cheerful, forever in profit. It is the small office in Barnet, north London, from where Raymond Gubbay — impresario extraordinaire — sets out his stall. And what a stall! This year, with a staff of nine, he will mount 200 classical music events that will attract 400,000 punters and generate a turnover of £10 million.

While the subsidised arts falter, Gubbay just gets richer. You may like what he does or loathe it (and loathing is pretty much *de rigueur* for the more fastidious music critics), but you have to admit that Gubbay is fantastically successful at pulling in audiences that no other musical organisation seems to reach. His flash-bang-wallop Classical Spectaculars, his Teddy Bears' Concerts for kids, his incorrigibly jolly Yuletide festivals ("It takes a good Jewish boy to give them what they want at Christmas," he says) — all these strike musical purists as naïf abominations. But just as surely, they strike Gubbay as potential goldmines.

For his part, Gubbay is equally scathing about what he sees as the fatal complacency in the subsidised arts. "There is always an audience out there, but you must constantly look for new ways to bring it in. I see a public eager for entertainment, but an arts establishment not always eager to please."

This week Gubbay will be in his element. As the highly subsidised Royal Opera House indulges in another bout of internal bloodletting while its companies lose millions on the road, Gubbay will mount a spectacular new production of *Madam Butterfly*. It will be his third opera co-production with the Albert Hall in as many years. It will play to more than 50,000 people in London and Birmingham. It won't cost the taxpayer a penny. And it will turn in a nice little profit for

Gubbay. Indeed, he has slotted in two extra performances to meet the demand for tickets. So how can he do what subsidised companies can't? First, he has no staff costs. He buys in an orchestra (the BBC Concert), something he believes that Covent Garden should also do. "Why does it cost so much to have a dozen fine orchestras are under-employed in London?"

Secondly, he pays "regional opera" rates for middle-ranking soloists, not mega-fees for alleged superstars. "The truth is that opera singers, with very few exceptions, are unknown to the public," he maintains.

Let the critics write what they want. I won't read it.

"And yet they command enormous fees — ten grand a night or more at Covent Garden. It's an international mafia that's pushing up fees all the time and contributing enormously to opera houses' problems. Why should the taxpayer give subsidy to Covent Garden when it is largely going into the pockets of a few singers? I find that the public neither knows nor cares who's singing. They are happy to come for the concept."

And "concept" is the third vital ingredient of Gubbay's arena-opera formula. This year he has carefully hired David Freeman — the radical Australian director, and a critics' darling — to stage the Puccini. But grand spectacle will undoubtedly be central to the enterprise. For a start, Gubbay is planning to flood the Albert Hall: 15,000 gallons of water will be pumped into vast tanks in the arena each night to make a "Japanese

water garden" replete with floating candles. The water will then be drained during each interval, presumably to reflect the draining hopes of the heroine. It sounds very H₂O-intensive for these drought-prone times.

"Not at all," Gubbay says. "Mindful of Thames Water's objections, we are being very green. We have tanks below the arena into which the water drains, and it is then filtered so it can be recycled fresh for the next show."

The other big technical problem for Gubbay is the sound. Because of the Albert Hall's size, and the fact that the audience is all around the action, amplification must be used. That, too, agitates some critics, who see it as a distortion of the operatic ideal. Gubbay is bullish. "It's galling that the critics knock me for doing this openly, yet ignore the amplification going on covertly in opera houses all over the world."

But after so many critical pastings in the past, Gubbay affects a disdainful indifference for the reviewers. "Let them write what they want. I won't read it, we'll still get full houses, and business will carry on. The public are the best critics anyway. If we get something wrong, we get it in the neck from them — and we bloody well take notice, because if we didn't they wouldn't come again."

Golders Green born and bred, the 51-year-old impresario seems to relish the fact that the very word "Gubbay" has become one of those brand names, like Hoover or Filofax, that are used informally to evoke an entire genre of human activity. "It's a compliment, isn't it?" he asks, a shade optimistically. "For 31 years I've earned my living in this funny old concert business. I still get a buzz from seeing a full house, and it's nothing to do with money." He pauses for a moment. "Well, perhaps it's a bit to do with money."

Madam Butterfly will open at the Albert Hall 0171-589 8212 this Thursday



Raymond Gubbay: "I see a public eager for entertainment, but an arts establishment not always eager to please"

Buried alive in old jokes

Beckett was not the first playwright to realise that absurd plays can inspire great theatre. The Italian Futurists, for instance, who hit their peak while Beckett was still a teenager, were sublimely silly. Their two-line "synthetic dramas" may not be theatrical masterpieces, but despite the Irishman's genius I am not convinced that in *Happy Days* he had very many more interesting things to say.

Ironically it needs a production as good as this by Leap of Faith to bring that revelation home. Here we see a middle-aged Winnie buried up to her belly button in papier maché, prattling her days away while her husband, potently ignores her. After the alarm clock jerks her awake she brushes her teeth, squints in the mirror, and fiddles with

her guns. She is surprisingly sexy. Her ample bosom is parked in a dark revealing red shift. Hugh Kenmore's Willie emerges in a string vest from behind Winnie's heap of sand. He blows his nose, spreads the handle on his bald head and places a straw boater on top. He reads from a newspaper and barks occasional non-sequiturs in a stiff-tipped, public school accent.

They are an odd couple, old before their years, in the process of being buried alive. Like one of Mike Leigh's suburban monsters, Winnie rubs on, betraying little cracks of despair as she endlessly sorts the contents of her headbag. She puts up a small parcel and to the amusement of the audience it promptly starts smouldering. Despite the lightness of Winnie's towering monologues this is not light relief. She is merely running out of everything except things to say. "Ah well, mustn't complain." It is the insane sort of optimism which the elderly and the damaged corner you with in shops.

What's she doing... what's the idea... stuck up to her doddies in the bleeding ground... What does it mean?... What is it meant to mean? asks Mr Cooker, or is it Mr Shower? "Why doesn't he [Willie] dig her out of the ground?" Winnie, who relates this surprisingly reasonable line of questioning, tells us that this was the last human contact that she and Willie had on this theatrical acid trip. It's also the point where I wanted to get off.

It sounds absurd but the actors outperform the play. Kenmore provides sharp comic support as the decrepit Willie. But Bellamy gives an extraordinary performance, full of light banalities and sharp fearful notes like the daily discovery of the gun that's always at the top of her bag.

In the second half, when she is buried up to her neck, the optimism is subverted by depression and real panic. One cannot help but thrill to her performance in a way that one cannot thrill to the pretentiousness and absurdity of Beckett's old jokes.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

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Beautiful deconstruction

FUSION cooking may be all the restaurant rage, but artists such as Shobana Jeyasingh have also been synthesising cultures. Jeyasingh founded her dance company in 1988 with the aim of taking the old — in her case the venerable South Asian dance form of bharatha natyam — and marrying it with the new and global.

The title of Jeyasingh's new piece, *Intimacies of a Third Order*, refers to the themes of "leave-taking, journeys, arrivals and above all new ways of belonging" which initiated her working process. The outcome for her six female dancers is plotless, beautiful and mysterious. The signs of bharatha natyam are deconstructed — pulled apart, amended, added to and merged into western-style contemporary groupings, duets and eye-contact. Sometimes flashes of the old geometry and foot-stamping



erupt intact, like fragments of memories; sometimes you see the torso in its upright axis, arms shooting their familiar linear patterns out from it. But then the torso tilts and twists, the arms soften and curve, the legs swing into martial-art kicks and ballistic jumps.

The energy level is often upbeat, driven by the chunky brass gasps of Michael Gordon's minimalist score. Is it the music's later adagio section that causes the dance's impetus eventually to sag? Even so, Gordon offers more interest than Andy Cowton's hackneyed whirrs and rumbles for the programme's other piece, Wayne McGregor's *Interference*. The company's dancers inhabit this sound-world with an even-paced dynamic that becomes monotonous. Like Jeyasingh, McGregor punctuates his eclectic dance grammar with its own, occasional, aural component: breath, sharply inhaled or exhaled with accompanying contractions. The standing movement has the slow sculptural graphism of tai chi but the floor activity, lacking clear definition, tends to slump into amorphous gropes.

McGregor's choreography could be linked to anything — or nothing. The effect is handsome enough, helped by Madeleine Morris's giant hanging-paper chains which ornament both dance pieces. But McGregor's empty decorativeness becomes as sterile as a computer screen.

NADINE MEISNER

Italian job pays off

THE name of Franco Donatoni is too often missing from lists of seminal 20th-century composers, so all credit to the Royal Academy of Music for at last giving the Italian his due in its twelfth International Composer Festival, with talks, discussions, masterclasses and concerts over the three days.

Donatoni has been in residence throughout, and at the close of Wednesday night's concert in the Duke's Hall the composer, a severe-looking, grey 70-year-old, struggled to the platform to greet the players, who stood behind him to share the applause — bright-eyed, their lives ahead.

Straddling the disparate age groups was the experienced Italian conductor Simone Fontanelli, who guided the responsive players of the Manson Ensemble with a sure hand. The concert was titled "Donatoni in Perspective" and it opened with a work by his compatriot, Bruno Maderna. The start of the *Serenata No 2* was hesitant, but before long those all-important sonorities were being executed with more confidence, the gaps between them more precisely calibrated.

Webern's *Six Pieces*, Op 6, heard in their chamber version, also deploy colour to unify fragmentary material. The second piece, for example, begins with a quaint duet for

tophe Charron, the remaining works were by Donatoni. Holy (1990) put the oboist Emma Bullough through her paces — a test she passed with aplomb — with its taxing, and unremitting, writing for oboe and cor anglais. This is not so much civilised discourse as point-scoring repartee. *Tempi* (1981) once again concerns itself with rapture and integrity. At one point the fragments cohere into something like a Mendelssohnian scherzo, and the end marks an uncertain rapprochement.

Bizarre timbres characterise *Le Ruisseau sur l'escalier*, in which Kirstin Spencer was the admirable cello soloist, though ear-licking instrumental colour is about the last thing of which one could accuse Donatoni: a modernist of uncompromising rigour.

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On Sunday, Sir John Mills turns 90. Good reason to look back on an inspired and inspirational career



In which he was served: John Mills gets stuck into a rock cake and cup of tea from a replica NAAFI wagon at the opening of the RAF's Battle of Britain exhibition in 1990

The soul of Englishness

Sir John Mills at 90 is an event. It is given to few to be as admired, as appreciated and, as the years have left him unbowed, as loved. He is a large slice of the history of the British cinema and perhaps the prime living example of what we like about an Englishman. His life and work seem to have gone hand in glove. When the dross inevitable in any long prolific career — itself the span of a biblical life — is blown away we are left with a rare body of achievement in which the man becomes more than the sum of his many parts.

He stands for an idea of what was widely regarded as the best of English not so very long ago: plucky, resilient, honest, stoical, amused, tolerant, self-deprecating. Now he is almost blind, going deaf, but you would never notice that, in white tuxedo with silver-knobbed stick, he comes spruce and dapper on to the stage to poke fun at his life and times in a charming one-man show.

At the age of six he made up his mind to be an actor and never wavered. His father was a teacher in a naval college. He was sent away to a school in which, small for his age, he was brutally bullied — once, almost to death. In true English style he found a way to fight back, turned on his big tormentor, broke his nose and became the school hero.

Dickensian jobs just about bankrolled him from 16 onwards while he took dancing classes in Soho

and struggled to get onstage. He is very funny about those early days, especially the time spent selling lavatory paper. "My heart wasn't in it," he told me. "In truth, I found the demonstrations rather embarrassing."

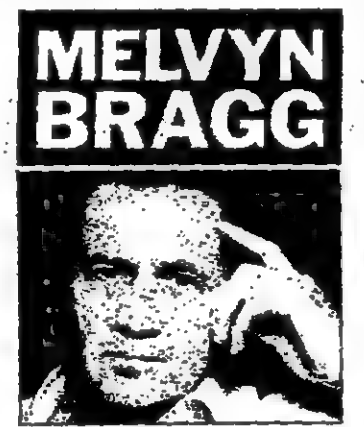
The Quixotes, a company which tackled everything from revues to Shakespeare, went to the Far East and an accident-scattered evening in Singapore resulted in an unintentional farcical performance which caught the eye of Noel Coward, who thought that Mills had meant it. In 1931 Coward put Mills in the blockbuster *Cavalcade*. "England! Here I am!" declared *The Times*. "I was very loyal and royal," Mills recalls, and he has stayed that way.

He was in 40 West End productions. Like James Cagney, his hero, he could dance and sing as well as do the dramatic. Unlike almost all English actors of the time, he genuinely liked working in the cinema. "It was very difficult at first," he said. "You're working so close, and then there is that silence! But if you act truly you can see just by the eyes the anxiety or the fear."

Significantly, I think, his cinema breakthrough came in *Forever England* in 1935, when he played an ordinary seaman doing an extraordinary deed. His life as the English Everyman was launched.

He was invalided out of the Army with ulcers and went back to the

cinema. "I had a duty to put the boys up there the way they were," he said. "No false heroics. I knew they were going through hell inside, but outwardly they didn't show it." That last sentence could be either a battle cry or, as some pessimists would like, an epitaph for Englishness.



He did put the boys up there, as Sherry Blake in Coward's *In Which We Serve* (where he began his collaboration with David Lean) then, promoted, as an RAF officer in *The Way to the Stars*. This was probably his finest wartime film. In it he read out a poem he had found in the pocket of a brother officer he had seen killed. He read in a clipped, neutral voice to the officer's widow, who looked away in anguish. It is a scene

so easy to send up nowadays but the really clever thing would be to try to understand it: "Do not despair for Johnny head-in-air/He sleeps as sound as Johnny underground."

There was Scott of the Antarctic — at that time an unequivocal English hero — and then *Ice Cold in Alex* where, for the first time, he was flawed: an alcoholic Army captain facing one last sortie over the desert before hitting Alexandria and that ice-cold lager. He tells the story in his show. "Started to film at 9am. Take one. Lager poured out. Action. Bang, down in one. Take two. Bang. Take 14. Absolutely plastered. Best morning's work I ever had."

In *Tunes of Glory* the skewer turned further and he played a martinet colonel at breaking point. Then, in *Oh! What a Lovely War* he became part of the move which set out to challenge and undermine the sort of character and virtues he had represented until then.

But, well before that time, Mills was fixed as a star, our star, much reinforced by playing Pip in *Great Expectations* and William Mossop in *Holston's Choice*. In one he faced the rising Alec Guinness and in the other the wily Charles Laughton, and in neither did he seem anything but their equal. "I always hoped to be considered a character actor rather than a star," he told me, and I believed him. His Oscar came for his best supporting role in *Lean's Ryan's Daughter*. "I played a deaf mute. No

lines. I would be drinking Guinness in the pub every night." When he does have lines he is strict on himself — abstinence, exercise, the full professionalism.

When he went back to the stage — most notably in *The Petition for the National* and most hilariously in *The Veterans*, with John Gielgud — a different public saw what a powerful actor he was. Encroaching blindness did not stop him. His wonderful cameo in *Martin Chuzzlewit* was enabled by a friend and neighbour who read the screenplay to him and then put it on a Walkman which Mills committed to memory in his very English garden down in Denham, next to the old English Studios.

It is common now to see all that John Mills was and all that he stood for coming to an end, but I am not so sure. When you look around, especially at today's teenage generation, there is a lot more of Mills than you would think.

He ends his one-man show playing the piano and singing a sentimental song which begins:

"Wherever the road may take you,
"Wherever the rainbow ends,
"And returns to the sentiment:
"Ever the best of friends."

As he has been to generations who have seen and still see the truth in John Mills and, in his acting, something of the truth in themselves.

Great to see him back

IT COULD have been supreme folly to book the 52-year-old Terry Callier into the Jazz Café for three consecutive nights. After all, we had not really heard from the man in 15 years, ever since he quit the music business, broke and disillusioned. Callier spent the intervening years hibernating in Chicago, raising his daughter, working by day as a computer programmer and studying at night for a sociology degree.

But his is a story with a happy ending, and all three dates sold out — evidence of the enduring power of his effortless fusion that deliciously blurs the boundaries of jazz, folk and soul.

His renaissance owes much to the DJ Gilles Peterson, who lured him out of retirement and signed him to Talkin' Loud, the fashionable label whose roster also includes the Mercury Music Prize winner, Roni Size. Callier devotes

POP

Terry Callier
Jazz Café

include the likes of Paul Weller and Benji Orton, with whom he recorded an EP last year. Through their championing, he became one of those word-of-mouth names to drop, raising high expectations of his comeback album *Timepiece*, a sublime collection of poetic and moving songs which hit the stores last week.

Live, he proves to be a warm and relaxed performer, a man who feels he has nothing to prove but clearly regards it as an honour and a privilege to be back on stage. He strummed an acoustic guitar while his seven-piece band was the epitome of laid-back, barely raising the tempo above a sophisticated strut.

His voice and delivery evoke obvious comparisons with his childhood friend Curtis Mayfield, but he also has an affinity with white performers, such as Jesse Colin Young and John Martyn, who inhabit similarly mellifluous territory. His voice soared heavenwards on the sultry *No More Blues*, the best track on his new album, while his version of Mayfield's *People Get Ready* was a smoothly swinging affair, full of space and air.

Gary Plumley's flute added a jazzy, Herbie Mann-like feel, while Jim Mullen's guitar offered hints of tasteful funk as the band stretched out on an extended version of the new album's title track.

During the break between his two sets Callier wandered around shaking hands, a delightfully modest man grateful of the opportunity to be making music again. At the end he seemed genuinely overwhelmed by a reception that approached adulation.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

This week in THE TIMES



Juliette Binoche stars in Pirandello's 1922 play *Naked at the Almeida*
OPENS: Wednesday
REVIEW: Friday



Grandee of the rock circuit, Van Morrison, performs in Brighton
GIG: Wednesday
REVIEW: Friday



An LSO survey of Shostakovich symphonies begins at the Barbican
OPENS: Thursday
REVIEW: Monday



Kevin Costner directs and acts in the futuristic epic *The Postman*
RELEASED: Friday
REVIEW: Thursday

PLUS: Egberto Gismonti plays ethnic-inspired jazz in the Festival Hall, Fri

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Reaching for a white flag again

Saddam will never respond to weakness, says Robin Renwick

As British and American pilots prepare for a difficult and dangerous task if Saddam Hussein continues to defy mandatory UN Security Council resolutions and to accelerate the production of chemical and, particularly, biological weapons, we find ourselves witnessing the familiar spectacle of the British intelligence disarray. Some of our most distinguished commentators are firmly sounding the retreat.

In this paper on February 7 Simon Jenkins — on any other topic, my favourite columnist — contended that President Clinton was looking for "a small state to bomb" and that he and the Prime Minister are Saddam's best friends. By virtue of his determination to resist Saddam's genocidal ambitions, Tony Blair is accused of wanting to join the Bomber Harris appreciation society and of planning the "cluster-bombing of Iraqi cities".

In the *Sunday Times*, Ben Pimlott accuses the Prime Minister of being drawn into an immoral (sic) war. It is hard, he concludes, to see that anything much can be achieved, beyond setting back the Iraqi weapons programme a year or two.

In the *Sunday Telegraph*, Auberon Waugh denounces this "fatuous enterprise" the object of which, he contends, is to distract attention from the President's alleged affair with a White House staffer. In the *International Herald Tribune*, Sir Roy Denman worries that we may be isolated in Europe, with the Prime Minister looking like the President's poodle.

The poodle epithet, of course, is not new. Attempts always used to be made to apply it to the relationship between Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher (though there was some doubt as to who was the poodle). And, to complete the picture, we now have the *Anglian* bishops accusing Robin Cook — an unlikely warmonger — of excessive belligerence.

Some of these commentators display the merit of consistency. They were just as resolutely opposed to the use of air power against the Bosnian Serbs, which put an end to the shelling of Sarajevo and paved the way for the Dayton accord, and to the Gulf War itself which, if it had not been fought and won, would have left us now dealing with a Saddam Hussein armed with nuclear weapons.

Under UN Security Council Resolution No 687, which sets out the ceasefire terms for ending the Gulf War, Iraq is obliged to accept the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of all its nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and ballistic missiles and research and development facilities associated with them.

Iraq also undertook not to develop such weapons and to allow immediate, unrestricted access to any site the UN inspectors wish to visit. Despite constant obstruction by the Iraqi authorities, the UN teams discovered and destroyed part of the Iraqi chemical and germ warfare arsenal. Iraq has been proven to have been producing large quantities of nerve gas and at least 50,000 litres of anthrax

and botulinum — supposedly for animal feed. Precisely because the inspectors were successful, Saddam has now brought an effective end to the inspection regime.

These weapons are not suitable for use against other countries' armed forces. They are designed for use against civilian populations. The degree of devastation they could cause would be equivalent to a small nuclear bomb.

Faced with this difficult and extremely dangerous situation, there are no good or easy options. Over the past decade, we have learned from bitter experience that Saddam has never been known to give way except in response to the use or threat of force.

On two occasions since the Gulf War, force has had to be used — in August 1992 and September 1996 — when air attacks were launched to enforce the no-fly zones and UN inspection regimes. On another occasion, America retaliated for an assassination attempt against George Bush.

Those who firmly oppose the threat or use of force to try to coerce the Iraqi regime into discontinuing these programmes have been able to offer no explanation of the alternative they propose — which, clearly, is to allow Saddam to continue to frustrate the inspection regime.

We must expect him to conclude, correctly, that he can get on with developing his biological weapons programme with much less interference than in the past — indeed, with no effective interference at all. Since these weapons can be used *inter alia* for purposes of terrorism, it would require an ardent optimist to conclude that he will never use them.

The least bad option, therefore, appears to be to threaten military action unless he complies. Those who want to see a diplomatic solution must surely realise by now that none will be forthcoming unless the pressures on Saddam include the threat of force.

If he remains obdurate, then military action to slow down and at least partially destroy these weapons programmes also would appear to be the least bad option. If certain sites cannot be inspected, they can be destroyed. That will not eliminate, but will set back his weapons programme.

No one wishes to increase the suffering of the Iraqi people. The ability to alleviate it is in the hands of their rulers. If the regime abandoned these programmes, Iraq would be able to benefit from large oil revenues and rebuild its economy. No one can complain that diplomacy is not being given time to work. Exhaustive efforts are continuing to persuade Iraq to comply.

As for the British people, the polls suggest that showing, as usual, more good sense than their intellectual advisers, they do support the Prime Minister in his contention that Saddam cannot be given free rein to pursue his biological warfare ambitions.

Lord Renwick of Clifton was British Ambassador to the United States, 1991-1995.

From the arts and the elderly to rural disquiet, warnings are being sounded on the Labour pitfall

Listen to your canaries, Mr Blair

William Rees-Mogg

The arts community is often a good political indicator. Like the farmers, artists are substantially interested in public subsidy, particularly for the classical performing arts. Individual artists tend to be left wing, though many are non-political and some are right wing. They are emotionally responsive, and often move quickly to new attitudes. In terms of public opinion, the arts community is like the canary in the coal pit: half a lungful of methane gas will make the bird keel over, but that may mean the whole mine is filling with gas.

This community feels betrayed by the Labour government. Its leading spokesmen, such as Harold Pinter and Sir Peter Hall, have already denounced the Government on different issues — Pinter on the Gulf and Sir Peter on arts policy itself. Sir Peter, who once climbed on a coffee table at the National Theatre to denounce its record as chairman of the Arts Council, has now said that the Labour policy is "rather worse than the excesses of Thatcherism". In fact, the Thatcher government increased the arts subsidy quite substantially in real terms, whereas new Labour has cut it. Apart from Danbert Nobacon's symbolic emptying of an ice bucket over John Prescott, the creative community is astonished at the Government's treatment of the arts.

This is not a question only of money. The new chairman of the Arts Council is to be Gerry Robinson, the chairman of Granada. Mr Robinson is a tough businessman, if that is what the arts need; his period at Granada has not been distinguished by a devotion to art but by devotion to the bottom line. If the Government had wanted a chairman of the Arts Council who combined television experience with a lifelong devotion to the arts, they could have invited Melvyn Bragg. Gerry Robinson is not a philistine, but his lifetime

contribution to the arts is far, far less than Melvyn Bragg's. When a government is making a mistake, there will usually be some foolish Member of Parliament who is only too eager to add insult to injury. Stephen Castle and my old colleague Paul Routledge, writing in *The Independent on Sunday*, have found just such a quotation from Denis MacShane, who is a Parliamentary Private Secretary at the Foreign Office. "Luvvies have been winning for more government cash since the Roman emperors hired them."

Both Horace and Virgil received the patronage of the Emperor Augustus: I do not know what passages from their works support the allegation that they whined for more cash. Ovid did whine to be allowed home from his well-deserved banishment for sleaze, but that is a different issue.

Artists are a dangerous group to take on. The chattering classes did a great deal to make new Labour fashionable, thereby to bring the Government to power in 1997. "It was luvvies who did it," it was said. I hear the argument that Harold Pinter and Sir Peter Hall have nowhere else to go: perhaps at the next election they will still be voting Labour as individuals; yet their impact depends on what they actually say. When Pinter states the public that he finds the relationship between Blair and Clinton "shameful and pathetic", there is no

lack of people to applaud him. The damage, such as it is, has been done. There are other powerful groups which are becoming uneasy. Much the largest, and therefore much the most powerful, is the older age group. A third of the electorate is either close to retirement or has already retired. At the last election I found, when I was canvassing in Scotland for my son, that this age group was the most sceptical about Labour promises. They, too, wanted a change, but were not confident that much good would

have not found a way to exploit this political opportunity: they, too, with a very young leader, leave an impression of being fixated on youth. But people notice the conduct of governments, and this is an administration which seems not to value old age. The old do not see themselves as part of the crew of "Cool Britannia".

Another group which feels increasingly alienated is the country people. This government seems to them to be wholly urban. There are indeed many anti-hunting people living in the countryside, though most of them probably work or have retired from working, in towns. Yet the hunting issue makes people who live in the country feel, and correctly, that Labour has little regard for their way of life.

More importantly, farming is suffering the worst recession for a generation. Psychological sympathy or alienation is central to politics. When it was first reported that the Scots saw Margaret Thatcher as too bossy and too English, little attention was paid because she was winning votes elsewhere. By 1997, the Conservatives had lost every seat in Scotland. Many country people now feel that Tony Blair is too urban for them.

In recent elections, British politics has been increasingly influenced by cultural as well as political factors. At the last election, new Labour completely outmanoeuvred the Conservatives in handling these cultural

movements, particularly the nostalgic youth culture of those who are now around 40. Scottish nationalism is itself partly a cultural phenomenon, and Welsh nationalism very largely so. The next election is again likely to be decided by cultural as well as by political issues. Will electors still identify with new Labour, or will they be swinging back to traditional loyalties?

The Tories have an opportunity to confirm their hold on the countryside: in terms of seats that is more of a threat to the Liberal Democrats than to Labour. The Liberal Democrats won five seats in Somerset at the 1997 election, but three of them are marginal: the belief that the Tories are still the natural party of the countryside could cost the Liberal Democrats all three, and many comparable seats elsewhere. The Tories also have to concentrate on the generation that stopped swinging 25 years ago — that generation is not impressed by the spectacle of middle-aged postbags guzzling champagne in Downing Street. If the grey vote and the countryside vote both swing back towards the Tories, that alone would take them well beyond 250 seats at the next election: they would be halfway home.

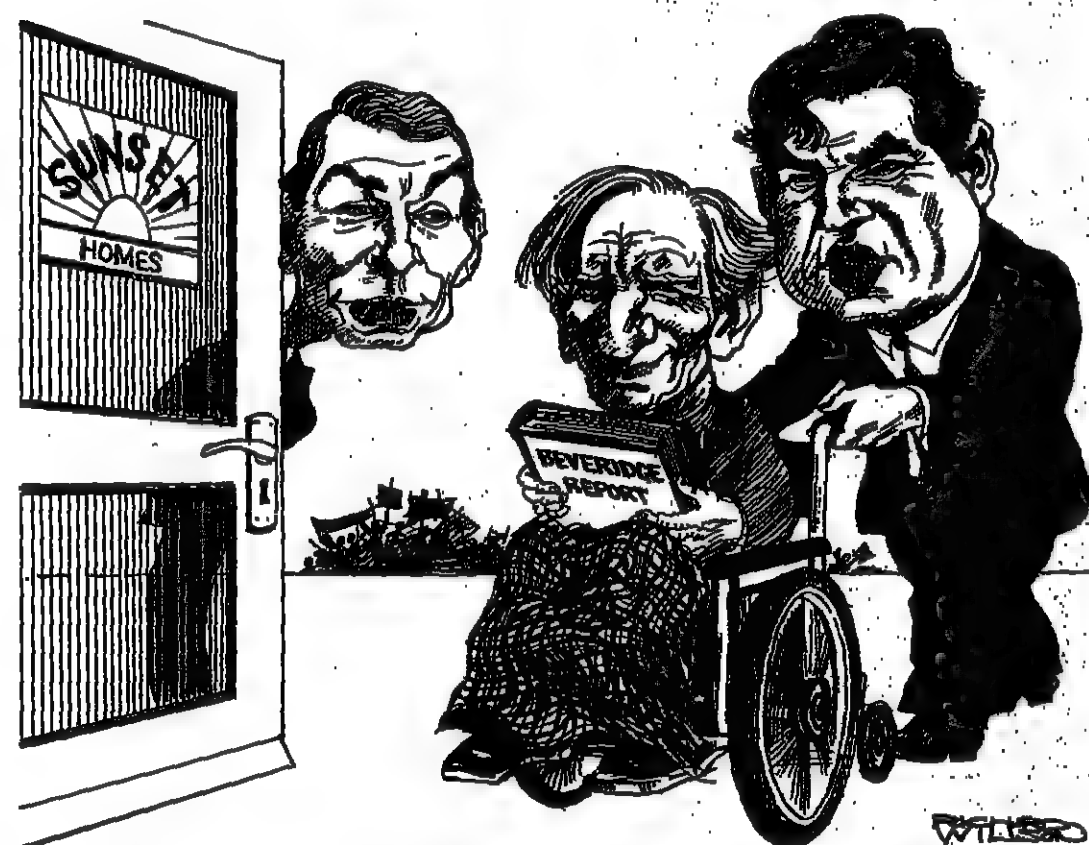
Yet if Labour insults the artistic community, as it has already done in big ways and little ones — Chris Smith is, in no more of a dud than a whizzbang as a minister — then Labour is attacking its own. *Practitioner's Guide to 1997*, what a beautiful quotation it will be for the next Conservative Party Speaker's handbook: "MacShane, Denis, 'Luvvies have been winning for more government cash since the Roman emperors hired them.' 'Luvvies'... whining... cash... hired... What love for the arts, what respect for artists, what sincere sympathy that quotation shows."

Poor old Labour has had its day

Even the most cherished beliefs are questioned now, says Peter Riddell

Welfare reform has become Tony Blair's top domestic priority. Since Christmas it has occupied more of his time than any other issue, apart from Iraq and Northern Ireland. There are now nine committees and Whitehall groups considering the future of social security alone, while reform will be the main theme of Mr Brown's Budget on March 17. These reviews challenge many of Labour's cherished beliefs. Since the 1970s, Labour's roots have been in the welfare state rather than heavy industry. A majority of the new Labour MPs elected last May worked in the public sector or caring professions, defending current welfare programmes. The attitude of many MPs to reform is therefore ambivalent. Is the aim of reform to improve the existing welfare state, or to change its very nature? In short, does the Labour Party accept the view of long-standing advocates of change such as Frank Field, the Minister for Welfare Reform, that welfare programmes have become part of the problem rather than the solution, by perpetuating dependency?

The answer has become a, if not the, distinction between old and new Labour. The Blairites have attacked many of old Labour's assumptions about universal entitlements. Their emphasis is as much on responsibilities as on rights. The Blairites are also challenging many attitudes that Labour had come to defend. It is not just the introduction of an element of compulsion into the programme to get the young and long-term unemployed back to work — requiring them to take a place on a training or special scheme, or a job, or else face the loss of some benefits. It is more



the broader questioning of existing approaches. Trying to improve failing schools via the creation of independent and innovative Education Action Zones challenges the monopoly power of local education authorities and of teaching unions.

Similarly, Jack Straw's proposals on zero tolerance and young offenders will shake up the police. The creation of the Social Exclusion Unit as a cross-departmental taskforce recognises that unemployment and poverty are inextricably linked with family breakdown, truancy and dropping out of school, and crime-ridden inner-city housing estates. Implicit is a rejection of the view that all claimants are victims and do not have to take responsibility for themselves. The Blairites believe that welfare reform is not just about money, but also involves changing

peoples' behaviour. It means support for those in genuine need who cannot provide for themselves, but otherwise temporary and conditional help to assist in moving people from welfare to work.

The Chancellor has presented the welfare debate in more familiar old Labour terms as being about unemployment, and the nearly one fifth of households where no one is drawing a wage. For Mr Brown, the dividing line is between those who are working and those who have come to expect not to work. His answer is to increase incentives to work and to remain in work. Mr Brown argues that insufficient attention has been paid to encouraging people to move up the jobs ladder. His first instal-

ment was the Welfare to Work programme, mainly for the young unemployed, lone parents and the disabled.

David Willetts has argued that the need for such an expensive scheme has been undermined by the sharp fall in youth unemployment, though the real test will be in any recession. It will soon be extended to both workers and part-timers. The second instalment, announced in November, is the working families tax credit to boost the incomes of the low paid, though this shifts payments from the purse to the wallet, which affects independent taxation of women. The Treasury has suggested a check-off system allowing money to be paid direct to a wife, though this may still be administratively cumbersome. The third part, in the Budget, will almost certainly involve the introduc-

tion of new 10p in the pound starting rate of income tax, together with changes in employers' and employees' national insurance contributions to increase incentives. The rate at which benefits are withdrawn may also be reduced. Mr Brown argues that the national minimum wage is a vital component, since without it employers would be tempted to pay low wages and rely on government subsidies to boost household incomes.

The Prime Minister's new welfare committee is looking at the whole range of benefits. Mr Field has been pressing for a return to a contributory social insurance system which avoids the debilitating effects of means-testing. But social insurance is costly, because the Treasury would have to top up the contributions of those on low incomes. So a hybrid solution is likely. The insurance principle may be used for a second, "stateholder" pension, above the basic state pension, and to provide for residential care in old age. Otherwise, there is likely to be a greater focus on targeting help on particular groups — elderly pensioners, the disabled and lone parents who cannot work — possibly via a guaranteed minimum income.

Mr Blair initially presented welfare reform as means of shifting resources into education (and now health) without raising taxes. But, apart from shaking out fraud, any savings will be significant only in the very long-term. Shifting people from welfare to work is expensive, requiring personal advisors and training, as has been shown even in Wisconsin, the flagship of "American reform, where welfare rolls have fallen sharply.

William Hague recently compared Mr Blair's welfare campaign to Vietnam. The Government would, he said, keep on "committing more troops in the hope it will lead to salvation. In the end they will be forced to withdraw through lack of resources". The greater danger perhaps is of proclaiming victory too early. Welfare reform will take not just one White Paper, or even one Parliament, but at least a decade.

V.S. in a paddy

WHILE the sub-continent celebrates 50 years of independence, Sir Vidyaadhar Surajprasad Naipaul, the Booker Prize-winning author, is lamenting the fall of the Raj — to the anger of turban types. The Indians, he has concluded, cannot look after their own temples. So filthy does he now find them, that he refuses to remove his shoes upon entering. V.S., who has lived in England for 40 years, has just visited Puri with his wife, Nadira. First stop: the Lord Jagannath temple. So disgusting did V.S. find the floor that he had an altercation. When he refused to remove his shoes, he was not allowed to enter. On to the equally grubby Kanchipuram temple in Tamil Nadu, where the author implored the priest to let him wear cloth shoes. The request was rejected. A trip to the Lingaraja temple proved no more successful.

"These are architectural marvels but I am shocked to see the extent of neglect," he tells me. "What the British tried to preserve and keep alive, the Indians are throwing away." The streets and paddy fields were little better. "The poverty of Indian streets and the countryside was an affront and a threat," he says. A pariah dog in the streets of Puri didn't help. "It would not stop barking," he complains. "I think it took an instant dislike to me." As might some of his brethren. "He's spent his life in the West Indies and England, so he's not equipped to



Puri show: V.S., Meera

comment on the struggle," says the actress, Meera Seal. "He's a wonderful writer but he's being old and crusty." He won't like that.

● **WARNING** to Gaynor Regan, companion and would-be assistant to our energetic Foreign Secretary. After my disclosure a couple of weeks ago that Robin Cook would celebrate Valentine's Day in Montserrat without Ms Regan, the Diary learns that the volcanic

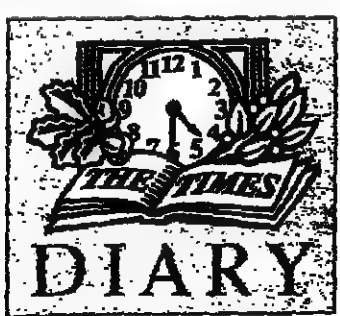
island sells itself to tourists as "the perfect place to fall in love".

Spooky

JEFFREY ARCHER has given the CIA a security tip, prompting senior spooks to change operational procedures. He showed *The Elephant Amendment*, a thriller he has just finished, to the CIA on a recent trip to Washington. "They want to make one section company policy," Archer suggests. "They wouldn't tell me exactly what but I suspect it is when a character is convinced that the President is on the other telephone line." The spooks found 20 mistakes in his manuscript.

Archer's research also took him to St Petersburg, where he spent a week with the Russian mafia. "They are jobs but they wouldn't let me meet their Mr Big. The average age of a living mafia boss is 38, so he probably won't last too long, anyway."

● **GIFTS** showered on the late, doleful ballerina Dame Margot Fonteyn by an army of stagedoor Johnnies. As she has no surviving family, proceeds will go to a charity. The most valuable lot is a diamond cluster brooch, expected to fetch more than £6,000. For £200,



JASPER GERARD

tutu fetishists can also avail themselves of a pair of Margot's pink block-toe ballet shoes, one of which is inscribed SBR Fonteyn (*Sleeping Beauty*, Right).

In to lunch

POOR Sir Edward Heath was booted for refusing to pay tribute to Enoch Powell upon his recent death; Baroness Thatcher alarmed squeamish Tories with her warm eulogy. But what does that other former Top Prime Minister, John Major, think? He, I can disclose, has written a warm letter of condolence to Powell's widow, Pamela, and here breaks his public silence on Powell's legacy to the Diary.

"Compelling" is his typically balanced judgment. "His influence far exceeded the political posts which he held. His economic thinking set the pattern for many of the successful economic policies of the 1980s and 1990s."

Neither Major nor Thatcher elevated Powell to the Lords. It is widely believed that Powell refused a life peerage, craving instead a hereditary honour. In fact, Powell realised that the hereditary award would never be bestowed upon him. "Enoch made clear to me that he would have taken a life peerage," says a former colleague. "Margaret refused to offer him one. She thought he would be too dangerous in the Lords." Pamela was especially keen for her husband to find employment. "She was fed up with him mooching around the house," says a friend. "Pam married him in sickness and in health, but not for lunch."

● **THE DEATH** of Diana, Princess of Wales, is to be the subject of a one-woman play by the scriptwriter Kay Mellor. Her previous work? *Band of Gold*, a TV saga about prostitutes. Touching Heaven features a soap star moping around during the princess's funeral. "It's like a comparison between two divas," says Mellor. Seats have not been reserved for the Windsors.



AS THE Middle East warms with megalomaniacs and madmen, it is to receive a visitor: Mona Samways, David Mellor's old chum, who will interview the beguiling Benazir Bhutto, and two widows of assassinated leaders: Leah Rabin and Herta and Paul Amirani. The blonde temptress, "She was fed up with him mooching around the house," says a friend. "Pam married him in sickness and in health, but not for lunch."

thinkers, but she gets what she wants; men-wise. "I have never met any of the women before," says Palestinian-born Mona. "But they all caught my imagination. I'm not interested in those who are famous for doing nothing," she adds with impressive seriousness. "I will ask her book on empowerment. Her take on empowerment differs from some of the previous advance."

هكذا من الاصل



A CLASH OF RIGHTS

Existing freedoms will suffer unless the Rights Bill is altered

Privacy is a human need which deserves protection. Yet needs like rights can conflict. The Human Rights Bill, to be debated in the Commons this afternoon, will transfer from Parliament to the courts the responsibility for deciding how important conflicting rights may best be reconciled. Before Parliament transfers that responsibility by simple use of this Government's mandate and majority, it should ensure that some precious freedoms do not become casualties of future conflicts. The Commons should endeavour to amend the legislation designed by the Lord Chancellor. Otherwise provisions on privacy, and other elements in the Bill, will fetter independent institutions, which are the mark of a free society.

The area where the Bill is most in need of improvement is its provision to turn voluntary institutions into "public authorities" whose proceedings can be challenged in the courts. The Commons is in danger of, as William Hague put it, replacing "the rule of law with the rule of lawyers".

Newspaper editors regulate their conduct through a voluntary body, the Press Complaints Commission, where individuals can secure speedy redress, apologies and corrections without the expense of going to law. Editors are anxious to be seen abiding by the code. It is widely recognised to have improved press behaviour. Under the present PCC that improvement will continue.

The Human Rights Bill was not originally intended to embrace the workings of the PCC. Article 8, which defends the right to personal privacy, was supposed to guard the citizen from the excesses of the State. But the Lord Chancellor has made clear that he considers the PCC as a "public authority" to be governed by the Bill even though it is a voluntary association. He defends the PCC's inclusion within the Bill's remit as a public authority because it is good for the citizen, giving him wider redress, and good for newspapers, by allowing the press rather than courts to do the regulating. He and his supporters are wrong on both counts.

If the PCC has new powers heaped on it by the Bill, it will break. Editors who have vol-

untarily submitted to its strictures will not willingly accept its mutation into a new body, with decisions reviewable in the courts, placing new restraints on publication. Why, editors might ask, run the risk of adverse judgments in the PCC if they can limit their exposure to those with the money to go to law? The citizen will be denied the use of a tribunal which at present works cheaply and effectively. And they will be thrust into the hands of lawyers whose fees most cannot afford.

The Prime Minister has made it clear he does not wish to see the freedom of the press curtailed by privacy laws, behind which the powerful can hide wrongdoing. A restatement of the Government's views during the course of today's debate would be helpful. But the best way of demonstrating the earnest of his intent would be an amendment to the Bill. The ideal alteration would make it clear that voluntary organisations which do not have statutory powers should not be considered public authorities. That would respect both the right of individuals and associations to the autonomy they should, anyway, enjoy in civil society as well as preserving the PCC in workable form.

If such a move were considered a step too far, then the Government might create an exemption for certain bodies which meet certain standards to be reviewed, from time to time, by ministers. That would allow future Governments to consider how effective the PCC was in ensuring self-regulation worked.

In the Data Protection Bill newspapers are exempt from certain provisions provided they act in accordance with a code approved by the Secretary of State. It is not an ideal compromise but it should prove workable. Newspapers do not wish to set themselves above the law. Judges may develop, over time, their own version of a privacy law. That is a matter for the courts. What Parliament can and must do is ensure that it does not construct a law which will so privilege an abstract commitment to privacy as to damage the existing protection citizens enjoy and the existing freedoms readers cherish.

INCONTROVERTIBLE PRINCIPLE

Weasel words will not advance an Ulster settlement

Semantics as much as substance have often seemed to shape the Ulster peace process. The particular nature of Irish history suggests that the distinction between the two is not as sharp as many might assume. At the outset of the first IRA ceasefire, the word "permanent" became a matter of forensic interest. After that, the phrase "decommissioning" made its appearance. It now seems that the superficially stark term "incontrovertible" will receive similar treatment. For this is the basis upon which objection will be raised to the expulsion of Sinn Féin from the multi-party talks — a decision that will surely be signalled today.

The facts are straightforward. Ronnie Flanagan, the RUC Chief Constable, informed Mo Mowlam on Friday that all available evidence implicated the IRA in the murders of Robert Dougan and Brendan Campbell. Mr Flanagan is a character with a reputation for straight talk, and a sophisticated awareness of the political implications of these cases. If he had sensed even the smallest chance that the issue of responsibility for these killings might be ambiguous, he would have exercised considerable caution. The Secretary of State has no reason to dispute his assessment.

Nor can it be said that these developments are surprising. For the last several weeks, the IRA has been back in business by proxy. The INLA cannot kill without the effective blessing of the IRA command. It is inconceivable that the murder of Billy Wright in the Maze prison last year would have come as an unwelcome shock to the Republican hierarchy. The IRA's preferred position has been that of intense involve-

ment in the peace process and selective activity in the murder market. This has now become embarrassingly obvious.

These transparent activities have not halted the appeals of those who think the peace process has no purpose without Sinn Féin's participation. John Hume and others but not all within the SDLP, appear to regard the word of the IRA as more credible than that of the Chief Constable. They have hinted that in this instance, unlike the multiple murders of Catholics associated with the Ulster Freedom Fighters, there is not "incontrovertible evidence" of IRA orchestration. If they believe Mr Flanagan is an idiot or a liar, they should say so and prove it. If not, they must abandon the politics of double standards.

If the extraordinary definition of "incontrovertible proof" outlined by Mr Hume yesterday were accepted, then it is almost impossible to imagine any incident that could be placed at the IRA's door except an atrocity that they officially admitted. The peace process cannot proceed on that basis. It may be considered inconvenient, but the IRA have been rumbled. It would be a mockery if that was not acted upon.

Once that determination has been made, it should be respected. The IRA have smashed one ceasefire and more subtly sabotaged another. The notion that Sinn Féin could be suspended for six weeks and then readmitted after "good behaviour" is contemptible. The objective of the peace process must be a proposal acceptable to an impressive majority of Ulster's population. The IRA Army Council should not have a veto over those voters.

BRAVE BIG BRITANNIA

Never mind the sex of the Millennium statue, admire the size

Two statues started their monumental lives yesterday. As we report elsewhere, the largest cranes in Britain have begun hoisting the Angel of the North into place. And the first intimation of the contents of the Millennium Dome at Greenwich disclosed that their centrepiece will be a gigantic statue. When they are completed, these will be by far the biggest statues in Britain.

Gigantism is a fashion that stretches from the Colossus of Rhodes to Mount Rushmore. Pheidias created the vast Athena in the Parthenon in order to inspire visitors with awe and to stun them with the power and wealth of his patrons. Gutzon Borghum was out to carve a national shrine for democracy.

Today such crude imperial hubris is both out of fashion and unrealistic. Gigantic political messages are unwelcome except in Baghdad. And representational sculpture has been rendered problematic by modernism and the widespread adoption of trousers instead of breeches or togas. For even the best tailored trousers look silly in marble or bronze. So the Gateshead angel is faceless and neutral about sex (as is appropriate for an angel). It will add a spectacular vision to travellers on the A1 and the East Coast main railway line, who already enjoy distant prospects of the finest cathedrals. The need to make a big statue is still with us.

For those who like a message with their

monuments, the Angel of the North proclaims the steel and ambition of manufacturing in the North East. But it also signals that here is the boundary of a different country, the lands of Bede and Columba on the one hand and the largest shopping complex in Britain on the other.

The gigantic statue in the Millennium Dome is also programmed to become one of the best-known monumental images. One plan being floated is for a statue of mother and child. Millions would interpret her as the supreme Christian icon of madonna and child. But visitors will be able to travel around inside her to observe the mysteries of biology and the "facts of life" that the British have such trouble with explaining.

The choice of a monumental female figure instead of a Millennium Man might be interpreted by some as political correctness, like her silver skin colour. For others she will simply be Britannia. Such a Greenwich mother of all statues could be taken as a signal that post-millennial thinking may be shaped by women as well as men. The statue is due to come down with the dome, unless she/he/it gets a popular remission after the anniversary like the Eiffel Tower and the Crystal Palace. But neither the Gateshead angel nor the Greenwich mother, father or androgyne will stand for as long as the cathedrals that celebrated the first millennium.

Community care and mental health

From Mrs Virginia Bottomley, MP for Surrey South West (Conservative)

Sir, I welcome the fact that the Government is to review the Mental Health Act 1983. Anti-psychotic drugs have transformed the options for the treatment of the mentally ill, who should continue to be cared for in the community where this is appropriate. However, this policy has become bedevilled by a series of problems:

1. There remains a deplorable level of ignorance and prejudice about the nature of mental illness. This applies, often at senior levels, amongst policy-makers, professionals, the media and even ministers.

2. Such are the financial pressures on the NHS that mental health is often the easiest budget to raid. Effective care in the community cannot be delivered without proper investment. Problems are compounded by the boundary disputes and cost-shunting between health, social services, the private and voluntary sectors.

3. While there has been a welcome expansion of professionals — more community psychiatric nurses, more psychiatrists, better-educated GPs — these additional staff are too often dedicated to patients with milder conditions. Those with serious mental disorders, often with associated alcohol and drug problems and peripatetic lifestyles, are rarely regarded as "good" patients.

4. Civil liberties advocates, who were so influential in resisting the powerful institutions, have failed to recognise that the pendulum has now swung too far. When I first proposed supervision registers and a new power of supervised discharge, this was met with howls of dismay that patients' rights would be overlooked; such measures were described as punitive or coercive. It is often too difficult to obtain crisis services or an order restraining a patient.

We should learn from the childcare experience. When fashion and compassion dictated that children at risk should not needlessly be separated from their families, it took professionals and the community decades to learn that supervising and caring for a child at home needed new disciplines. Until stringent explicit procedures were established we faced a deplorable series of child-abuse incidents.

In an institution an individual can be monitored 24 hours a day. In the community reporting and fail-safe mechanisms are necessary if tragedies are to be avoided.

Yours faithfully,
VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY
Secretary of State for Health,
1992-93,
House of Commons,
February 12.

Caution on Iraq

From the Reverend J. Johansen-Berg and others

Sir, We write to express our opposition to the production, use, or threat of use of biological or nuclear weapons by any nation.

We support the UN programme to carry out inspections of possible sites of such weapon production in Iraq (letters, February 9, 10, 14).

We oppose the threat by the US and UK Governments to initiate military attacks on Iraq because the people of Iraq will endure further suffering; there will inevitably be civilian casualties; there is no international consensus for such action and military action is not an effective instrument for solving such problems.

We support continued diplomatic and other non-military measures to overcome defiance of UN agreed policies, using a widely representative international team. We urge support of such policies by the UK Government.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN JOHANSEN-BERG,
Moderator of the United Reformed Church General Assembly, 1980-81
BERNARD GREEN,
General Secretary,
Baptist Union of Great Britain, 1962-91,
KENNETH GREET,
President of the Methodist Conference, 1980-81,
Barnes Close,
Chadwich, Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire B61 0RA,
February 14.

From the Reverend C. M. Jones

Sir, I am appalled by the ease with which our nation seems to be drifting towards the use of force against Iraq. I entirely agree that Saddam Hussein's stocks of chemical and biological weapons must be monitored effectively, but I have not yet heard a convincing explanation of the strategic coherence between the political objectives sought and the military options under consideration.

I cannot help suspecting that conviction of the justice of the cause, combined with possession of massive air-strike capability by the United States, has overridden prudential and moral evaluation of means in relation to ends.

It is to be hoped that representatives of our Government are exercising greater restraint behind the scenes than they appear to be doing in public.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER JONES
(Chaplain),
St Peter's College,
Oxford OX1 2DL,
February 14.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Price competition in newspapers under examination

From Mr John Taylor

Sir, From your recent reports (February 10, 11, 12) it seems that the Government is under pressure to pursue a policy of "leather bedding" *The Independent* by curtailing *The Times* play of cutting its prices to outsell its rivals — hitherto a widespread business practice generally regarded as advantageous to the consumer.

What, then, will be the Government's attitude to the many free sheets throughout the country, whose *gratis* distribution is aimed at achieving questionable circulation figures in excess of traditionally priced local newspapers in order to divert the advertising revenues of the latter into their own columns?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN TAYLOR
(Editor, *British Style*),
2 Beacon Hill, N7 9LY,
February 12.

From the Editor of Incentive Today

Sir, If there was a single promotional-marketing expert among the peers who voted in the Lords report, February 10 for tough new controls aimed to outlaw Rupert Murdoch's sustained newspaper price war, he or she would know that price promo-

tions have been an element of the marketing mix for almost as long as any other promotional offer used to drive sales.

Apart from the difficulty in proving whether or not price-cut promotions are "predatory", it would be nonsense to try to ban price promotion of *The Times* without banning price promotions in every other product sector, including cans of beans. In overturning the House of Lords vote the Labour Government would be right to recognise that product marketing is a fiercely competitive business, and price promotions are a legitimate part of it.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES FORD,
Editor, *Incentive Today*,
Miller Freeman plc,
630 Chiswick High Road, W4 5BG,
February 13.

From Mr John Hartley

Sir, Your leading article of February 10, "Enemies of success", was timely and measured. Under the pretext of militating against "predatory pricing" — which sounds a very good thing to an old-age pensioner such as myself — many of the Lords who spoke in the debate on February 9 talked nonsense.

The trouble with most of those who

preach competition is that they have so little practical experience of it. Lord Ackner, a law lord at the pinnacle of the most anti-competitive profession on Earth, utters platitudes about competition: these echo the Bar Council's absurd view that, in effect, every member of the Bar is in competition with every other. Yet until recently right of audience in the High Court was accorded only to members of the Bar, apart from the litigant in person. There was no law against it, in the sense of an Act of Parliament, merely a rule of the Supreme Court, made, of course, by the judges.

That Lord Borrie, for years Director General of Fair Trading, should use emotive words such as "predatory pricing" is equally absurd. If *The Independent's* impending demise as a result of *The Times's* predatory pricing displeases him, perhaps he would care to find the readers necessary to put it on its feet again? Or perhaps the existing Liberal Democrat readers could be persuaded to pay dramatically over the odds for the paper's pitiful hump?

I fervently hope you will stick to your guns.

Yours faithfully,
J. L. A. HARTLEY,
40 Winchester Court, W8 4AE,
February 11.

Reform of the Lords

From the Marquess of Bath

Sir, I believe that the House of Lords, in its reformed state, should reflect the regional divisions within the United Kingdom as a whole.

The hereditary peers should be replaced by delegations not only from Scotland, Wales and Ireland, but also from the English regions — eight of them I would suggest, each with its own assembly, and on the basis of a delegation of between 10 and 25 life peers per region; perhaps proportionally to the population of each. They should in any case be elected (indirectly) from the floor of that regional assembly, to sit alongside whatever number of life peers from the United Kingdom as a whole might be regarded as appropriate. Their chief responsibility would be to represent their region in the House.

Such a system would lend gravity to the role of the regional assemblies, so

that local young politicians would perceive it as their route towards national influence, by promotion from their particular regional assembly to a House of Lords which could by then be entrusted with extended powers.

Speaking as one of the hereditary peers who will soon (quite rightly) be deprived of our seats in that House, I shall relinquish mine the more happily if we are to be replaced by life peers so elected.

Sincerely,
BATH,
Longleat House,
Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 7NN,
February 8.

From Mr T. Dommett

Sir, Viscount Runciman (letter, February 11) questions whether the most suitable potential members would stand for election to the second chamber, and whether those who do stand would succeed in getting elected. In the former case, the

delivered the improvements that we need. If this deserves two out of ten, what must we do to score more?

Yours faithfully,
PAUL BLACK,
King's College, London,
School of Education,
Cornwall House, SE1 8WA,
paul.black@kcl.ac.uk
February 8.

From Mr Eric Dehn

Sir, It will be a sad day educationally if the allocation of marks or grades is to be abolished on the grounds that arrogance or depression will automatically ensue. This will not happen if teachers fulfil their roles and praise, blame, challenge, encourage as appropriate.

In recent years there has been a movement towards so-called egalitarian fairness, leading to the abolition of prize days unless all are recipients of prizes, to the cancellation of the egg-and-spoon race lest losers become traumatised.

The young are going out into a competitive world where there will inevitably be winners and losers. In addition it is, I feel, more normal and healthy for a nine-year-old, say, to target mathematical figures rather than female ones.

Yours sincerely,
ERIC DEHN,

5 Trelawney Road,
Bristol BS6 6DX,
February 6.

London's mayor

From Dr Stuart Moore

Sir, You report today that the Cabinet is likely to support the candidature of Glenda Jackson, MP, as Mayor of London for new Labour, in an attempt to block that of Mr Ken Livingstone. You also imply that this may be because Mr Jackson possesses "automatic standing on the world stage".

This characteristic she may well possess; but to resident voters of the capital that is irrelevant to the solution of its major problems. As a lifelong Tory voter I largely deplore much in the political stance of Mr Livingstone; but in terms of his administrative experience of the needs of the capital and the radical turn of his mind he is much the most serious person to date to emerge as a suitable candidate for mayor.

If this Government is truly serious about so-called "people power", then on the ballot paper in any forthcoming London mayoral election one should be able to write in the candidate of one's choice, in order to thwart party-political machinations.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
STUART MOORE,
49 Arundel Square, N7 8AP,
February 11.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046, e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Home delivery

From Dr Sasha Morris

Sir, I was entranced to watch my daughter tap into the Internet her weekly order for all her food and cleaning requirements from a leading supermarket. She told me that it would be delivered by van the following morning.

"Wonderful," I thought, until I remembered that my grandmother in Glasgow, between the wars, used to telephone her "grocer" in the morning and have her order delivered only two hours later by a boy on a bicycle. Have we really moved forward?

Yours faithfully,
SASHA MORRIS,
19 Chessington Lodge,
Regents Park Road, N3 3AA,
February 10.

A question of jobs

From Mrs D. C. M. Wilson

Sir, The answer to Mr Geoffrey Treherne (letter, February 9) on the £43 million of government cash to secure the production of a new Jaguar car in Britain (report, February 3) is that "the media, or anyone else" realise that bread has to be earned before it can be made into toast Melba.

Yours faithfully,
DOREEN WILSON,
70 Long Road, Framingham Earl,
Norfolk NR14 7RZ,
February 10.

Collision course

From Mr M. G. H. Dillon

Sir, Judging by the contradictory correspondence (February 7, 12) from mariners on the subject of helm orders, it is surprising that there are not more collisions at sea.

The order given to the helmsman of the *Titanic* was apparently "Hard a-starboard". The intention was to turn the ship's head to port. The effect was the same because all the damage was sustained on the starboard side.

The film shows the helmsman turning the wheel to port and the ship's head moving to port. The convention for issuing helm orders was changed in 1933 so that the direction of the order was the same as that in which it was desired to turn the ship's head.

If the steering mechanism of ships was reversed as well at this time, as Captain K. M. MacKenzie states (February 12), the portrayal of the scene is wrong. If only the convention for issuing orders was changed, as the *Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea* (1976) has it (before the mid-1930s, "hard a-starboard" meant "turn the wheel to port"), the film is correct.

All parties would probably agree that the expression "Full starboard rudder", mentioned by Rear-Admiral J. F. Perowne (February 7), is unauthentic from a British point of view and incorrect in its effect.

Yours faithfully,
M. G. H. DILLON,
113 South Avenue,
Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 1QS,
February 12.

Popular demand?

From Mrs Jo Birkbeck

Sir, Unable to purchase a particular novel by George Target, I ordered it from the public library at Norwich. They informed me their only copy was with the Prison Library Service and not for loan. The title? *The Triumph of Vice*.

Yours faithfully,
J. BIRKBECK,
330 Dereham Road,
Norwich, Norfolk NR2 4DL,
February 14.

Secret Basingstoke

From Miss V. C. Collin-Russ

Sir, Basingstoke an unlikely venue for international intrigue (report, "A roundabout choice for spies", February 13) Gilbert and Sullivan fans know otherwise.

In *Ruddigore* Mad Margaret claims that the very word Basingstoke "means with hidden meaning".

Yours faithfully,
VALERIE COLLIN-RUSS,
Flat 7, 20 Hampden Gurney Street,
London W1F 5AL,
February 13.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
February 14: The Prince Edward this morning opened the new Real Tennis Court at the Bristol and Bath Tennis Club, Clifton College, Bristol, and was recieved by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Somerset (Colonel Sir John Wills, Bt).

The Duke of Kent, vice-chairman, British Overseas Trade Board, will visit Cantor and Silver, Manor Road, Brackley, at 10.30; as president, the Scur Association, will open the Sir John Lowther Activity and Training Centre, Rushton Road, Glendon, Kettering, at noon, and will visit Cosworth Engineering, St James Mill Road, Northampton, at 2.30.

Mr Charles Malden
A memorial concert to celebrate the life and work of Mr Charles Malden, Headmaster of Windesham House School, Sussex, was held in the school's Malden Theatre on Saturday.

The concert, organised by Mrs Malden, Mrs Lucinda Williams, Miss Alexandra Malden, Miss Grace Malden and Miss Georgia Malden, daughters, and directed by Mr Nigel Wicken included music from the works of Purcell, Bach, Sui, Saint Saens, Chopin, Mozart, Jerome Kern, of Paradis, Zelenka, Weber and Charpentier.

Canon Anthony Phillips led the prayers. Mr Hugo Bowles, Mr Martin Mays Smith and Mr Alec Ritchie paid tribute.

Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, Commander in Chief Fleet, was host at the Mountbatten Festival of Music, given by the Massed Bands of the Royal Marines in the Royal Albert Hall, on February 12. Major General David Pennefather, Commandant General Royal Marines, was host on February 13 and 14. On respective days the principal guests were the Right Hon George Robertson, Secretary of State for Defence, Dr John Reid, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, and General Sir Ian Gouglav.

THE warm sunshine has started a riot of song. Chaffinches came to us from wherever last week, and can be heard all along the country lanes. Sometimes, they break off their song and dart out to catch an early fly. Wrens are singing vigorously in the hedge bottoms in a severe winter. many of these tiny birds die, but this year most of them have survived so far. Robins are singing their spring song, which is much richer than the winter version: the opening notes are often as loud and clear as a song thrush's. Greenfinches have added a complete rattling song to their wheezing spring song.

A soft tinkling and murmuring comes from the tops of pine trees where goldfinches are feeding in small flocks: their red faces peer out from

Mr Paul Bailey, novelist, 32; Mr P.E.R. Bailey, former director, Gwatick and Stanstead Apartments, 73; Mr Iain Banks, author, 44; Mr James Beaton, GC, 55; Professor Robin Clark, FRSc, chemist, 63; Arthur Crook, former editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, 86; Mr F.G.R. Cuming, painter, 68; Sir Anthony Dowell, ballet dancer and director, Royal Ballet, 55; Mr David Emmis, former director, London Goodenough Trust for Overseas Graduates, 73; Professor John G. Gribble, 74; Mr J. H. G. 53; Mr David Griffiths, portrait painter, 59; Mr Peter Hain, MP, 48; Viscount Laverghy, 52; Professor Jack Law, mechanical engineer, 72; Mr John McEnroe, tennis player, 39; Sir Michael Milne-Watson, former chairman, Bupa, 88; Mr J. J. Moore, former Headmaster, Dulwich College, 55; Mr Peter Porter, poet, 69; Mr John Schlesinger, film director, 72; Sir James Swaffield, former director-general and Clerk to the GLC, 74; Dr J. Tobin, anaesthetist, 64; Sir Peter Webster, former High Commissioner, 74; Mr Nigel Wallcut, former chairman, the Warwick Club, 71.

[illegible]

WHAT may be Britain's oldest shop is for sale. Set in the Trough of Bowland — where the Queen said she would like to retire to — the village store at Chipping first opened its doors in 1668.

Now Jeff and Sylvia Latham, the latest owners, are selling up after 12 years behind the counter.

The shop is currently the village Post Office. Customers step down from the street

BIRTHS: Philipp Melanchthon, theologian, Bretten, Germany, 1497; Giambattista Bodoli, type designer, Saluzzo, Italy, 1710; Heinrich Barth, North African explorer, Hamburg, 1821; Sir Francis Galton, anthropologist and geneticist, Birmingham, 1822; Ernst Haeckel, biologist, Potsdam, 1834; Henry Brook Adams, historian, Boston, Massachusetts, 1838; George Macaulay Trevelyan, historian, Welcombe, Warwickshire, 1876; Robert Flaherty, film director, Michigan, 1894.

DEATHS: Richard Mead, physician, London, 1754; Lionel Luk

If anyone would boast, let him boast of the Lord. For it is not the one who recommends himself, but the one whom the Lord recommends who is to be exalted.

BOULT - On February 11th 1976 to Amanda (nee Cook) and Eric, two daughters, Christopher and Thomasine Michel.

CAMPBELL - On February 11th, 1976 to Margaret Croft and daughter, Hezweyne Violet Cella, a sister for Terry.

COMBON - On February 8th to Melvane (nee Goss) and George, a son, Harry Robert.

COOK - On 12th February, to Ros (nee Ellis) and James, a son.

FARGUHANSON - On February 10th to Catherine and George, a son, Rory Charles Bruce.

MORRELL - On February 10th to Margaret (nee Wainland) and Terry, a daughter Aislinn Louisa, a sister for Harry.

NEWMAN - On February 11th 1976 to Rose (nee Spence) and Mack, a daughter.

THOMSON - On February 6th 1976 to Claire (nee Patchen) and Elizabeth, two daughters, Molly Elizabeth.

RENNETT - John, died peacefully at home on February 13th. Loved by his wife Monica and family. No flowers.

GRININ - Janet (Dede Andrews) peacefully at hospital on February 11th 1998. Beloved wife of George, devoted mother and mother-in-law of David and Martin, darling Grandma to Oliver, Clementine, Isabelle and David. Will be buried at the Church of the Transfiguration, Chaddesley Gled, Chaddesley Gled, on February 20th at 2:30pm. No flowers please but donations to The Artist's Relief will be appreciated. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund may be made to the Imperial Cancer Service, 32-34 Princes Road, Poole, Dorset. Tel: 01202 512345.

GREER WALKER - Geraldine (Buster) on 17th February. Funeral at St James the Less, Stubbings, Maidenhead at 11:00am on Monday 2nd

NICHOLSON - Sealy MBE 11th at h aged 86. Joan and

[illegible]

held at Yoster Parish Church, Clifton on Tuesday, March 11, 1976, at 11.15 a.m. Cremation private thereafter. Family flowers only. Private burial in the law of flowers to the Necrology Memorial and Victoria House, Glasgow Sick Childrens Hospital Trust Endowment.

KILGUS on 2nd February, 1976, unexpectedly in Sydney, Australia, Michael John - deceased, Michael John - deceased, David John - deceased, Douglas - deceased, Lillian and the late John Edgar. Funeral dates to be announced. Donations to Michael Edgar Scholarship Fund and enquiries to Paul Edgar, 100, Victoria Road, Coleraine Co. Down. Tel (01892) 22222.

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OBITUARIES

HAROUN TAZIEFF

Haroun Tazieff, volcanologist, died on February 2 aged 63. He was born on May 11, 1914.

Haroun Tazieff was probably the best-known name in postwar volcanology. To say that he popularised volcanoes, particularly in his adopted France, is to belittle a man who became a kind of Patrick Moore of volcanology — and also ended up with a prominent position in the Mitterrand Government.

Although always an amateur at heart, he awakened an enthusiasm and interest in active volcanoes that swept across France, and the effects are far-reaching even now. It is probably due to him that public finance for volcanological research in France became greater than in any country outside the United States, and created the present generation of brilliant French researchers. Like his beloved volcanoes, Tazieff could by turns be unpredictable, destructive and, above all, monumentally impressive. He was widely respected by his public.

An adventurer and a wanderer by nature, he was born in Warsaw to a Russian father and a Polish mother. His father died when Haroun was an infant, and the boy was brought up in St Petersburg before moving with his mother (a powerful influence on him) to Brussels, where he found himself in the Resistance and on the run from the Germans in the latter stages of the Second World War.

Sitting in the back of university geology lectures offered him both relief from boredom and a good hide-out from his pursuers, and those lectures were his first introduction to his lifelong passion. After studying agriculture and geology at the University of Liège, in 1948 he manoeuvred his way into an expedition to the active cone of Kilauea in central Africa, and quickly realised the possibilities of bringing the spectacular sights that he saw to the general public.

From 1950 to 1952 he was assistant professor of mining geology at the University of Brussels, but he spent much of the latter 1950s visiting erupting volcanoes around the world and filming them from a great deal closer than had previously been deemed advisable. Great fame came suddenly in 1959, with the release of his film *Les Rendez-vous du Diable*, usually known in English as *Volcano!*

The film made a huge impression when it was shown as a supporting feature at cinemas throughout the world. It was in colour and filmed close to erupting volcanoes from



different continents, bringing the sights and sounds of a volcanic eruption to millions for the first time. Thereafter, a stream of popular books and films followed. Tazieff also acquired a reputation of having "a nose" for active volcanoes and how they might behave, and began to be consulted by worried governments with wayward volcanoes.

An unforgettable sequence from his most famous film shows Tazieff inside the crater of Stromboli volcano, standing a few metres from fountains of fire shooting out of the ground beside him. His legendary luck, and this daredevil side to his character would escape from time to time, despite all his efforts to keep within the limits of good safety procedures.

He was once seen with the top half of a heat-protective suit on, leaning over the edge of a small crater that had recently appeared in the side of Mount Etna. The crater blew up in

his face, removing his protective suit and helmet, neither of which were ever found again, but he escaped with slight burns to his nose that he was able to pass off as sunburn to his wife a week later. In fact, he was unusually safety-conscious for his time, and a prominent figure for a generally agreed code of conduct for volcanologists.

Moving to France in the 1960s he gathered around him a group of young researchers into volcanic gases. His 150 scientific papers were a major achievement, and he rose to become head of research and subsequently Director of the French National Council of Scientific Research; but he was never entirely at ease with the academic world, and was always happiest close to an erupting volcano with the spice of danger all around.

Many who now find a volcano to be the unexpected mistress of their lives began their volcanological careers with Tazieff and his team on one of

his trips to Etna during his "Belle Epoque". The team always consisted of a majority of Alpine mountaineers who acted as "shepherds", and accommodation would be as close to the top of the volcano as possible, at first in the old observatory near the crater, and later camping or bivouacking near the summit after the observatory was destroyed in the 1971 eruption. A sense of careful fun and adventure pervaded these trips, with mountaineering, scientific research, good food and wine, music and games of scratch rugby forming part of the daily ritual, with Tazieff always at the centre of things, dispensing his easy charm and telling stirring tales of past adventures.

At the same time, he was a man who could be unforgottenly pugilistic towards those with whom he disagreed (he had been a redoubtable amateur boxer in his youth). After one or two incidents in which he made public criticisms of other

scientists and authorities in the 1970s, the volcanic crisis at La Soufriere volcano on the French island of Guadeloupe in 1976 proved a turning point in his life. After a dramatic increase in earthquakes and steam explosions, the island's Governor decided to evacuate the area, fearing a catastrophic eruption. Tazieff publicly announced, correctly as events proved, that there was no danger to the populated areas lower down the volcano and that the enormous expense of the evacuation was a waste of money.

In the midst of this geopolitical furor, he fearlessly took his team to the top to sample gases, only to be caught in a major steam explosion. He and everyone in his team were injured by rocks thrown out, and they were very lucky to escape without fatalities. Political events mirrored volcanic: his public criticisms this time had been a step too far and, on returning to France, he was removed from his post. Tazieff felt the insult deeply.

He made further controversial public pronouncements in the years that followed: one spectacularly correct, in the case of the fatal explosion at Mount Etna in September 1979; another just as spectacularly incorrect, in the case of the Mount St Helens eruption of May 1980 in the United States. Increasingly, however, his talent for controversy found expression in the political sphere.

He had been active in politics at the local level in the 1960s, and later became Mayor of the town of Mirmande, near Grenoble, where he lived. He also served as a councillor for the Rhône-Alpes region. Once a Communist, he was no longer so after life in the USSR, but his sympathies were always on the Left, and he began giving public support to the Socialist presidential campaign in the early 1980s. When President Mitterrand was elected, he rewarded Tazieff, who remained a well-known and popular public figure, with a post as Secretary of State with responsibility for preventing natural disasters in France.

Tazieff became a prominent — and far from predictable — participant in ecological and environmental debates in France. His new job took him away from volcanoes for much of the rest of his life and, although he broke with many of his old friends, he felt vindicated and enjoyed a new and final period of fulfilment in his government position.

Haroun Tazieff's first wife predeceased him. He is survived by his second wife, France, whom he married in 1958.

JILL ALLIBONE

Jill Allibone, architectural historian and campaigner, died on February 3 aged 65. She was born on April 26, 1932.

INTELLECTUAL clarity, convictions strongly held and forcefully expressed, and an abhorrence of compromise are hallmarks of all campaigners. Jill Allibone had all of these, but she also had a non-nonsense practicality and a willingness to tackle problems which others had dismissed as intractable.

Jill Spencer Rigden was born in Abadan, Iran, where her father managed an oil refinery. Initially sent to school in England, she returned to Abadan on the outbreak of the Second World War. When Abadan itself was threatened, she was sent to South Africa but returned to England after the war, completing her schooling at the Godolphin School, Salisbury. In 1954, after studying fine art at St Martin's School of Art, she transferred to the Courtauld Institute to study the history of art.

In 1956 she married David Allibone, a solicitor, and successfully took her finals when eight months' pregnant. After graduating, she worked with her husband, and became a JP on the South Westminster bench in 1966. In the following year they bought a house in Benenden, Kent, where their ten-acre garden became their chief pastime.

In 1967 Jill Allibone's latent interest in architectural history reasserted itself, and she enrolled with Nikolaus Pevsner as her supervisor, to read for a doctorate at the Courtauld. Her subject was Anthony Salvin (1820-80), a pioneer of the archaeologically correct Gothic Revival, restorer of (among others) Windsor Castle, and the architect of the now derelict Thoresby Hall in Lincolnshire.

A book based on her thesis was published in 1987. Four years later came a biography of the architect George Devey (1820-86), who, though he worked in a very different style, was an exact contemporary of Salvin and also suffered an early eclipse. These meticulously researched

books led to a reassessment of both men, and to more attention and care being paid to their surviving works.

In the preface to the Salvin biography, Allibone wrote: "The continuous threat to Victorian buildings through greed and ignorance is a fact that cannot for an instant be ignored if we are to have anything of merit to hand down to our grandchildren." This feeling, passionately held, led to her increasing involvement



with active campaigning, especially in the Victorian Society, which had been founded by Pevsner and others in 1958. She joined its buildings sub-committee in 1977 and was elected vice-chairman in 1995.

She was one of the most active participants, willing not just to offer advice but to take on important cases, particularly churches in Kent, for which she fought with vigour. In 1993 she single-handedly persuaded the Commissary General of the Canterbury diocese to refuse permission to St Luke's, Maidstone, to remove its fine Arts and Crafts pews (though the judgment was overturned on appeal).

In 1996, with characteristic energy, she set up a trust to address the problem of maintaining monuments and mausolea of architectural importance where the owning family had either died out or lost interest. The Monuments and Mausolea Trust has taken over the ownership of five mausolea, and the search for funding for their restoration and maintenance is in hand.

She is survived by her husband and three daughters.

CARLO ALBERTO CHIESA

Carlo Alberto Chiesa, Italian antiquarian bookseller, died on January 25 aged 71. He was born on September 7, 1926.

KNOWN well beyond his own country, Carlo Alberto Chiesa was the leading antiquarian bookseller and the finest connoisseur of rare books and manuscripts in Italy. He was born in Milan, the son of Pietro Chiesa and Carolina Arrigoni. His father was a master artist in glass, the founder of Fontana Arte (which still exists), and a cultivated collector and designer who collaborated with Manzoni and Sironi.

After school, in Milan, Chiesa proceeded to the university to read law, but he never graduated. From 1950 to 1952 he lived in Paris, then as now a great centre for collectors and booksellers. Among the latter he was particularly close to Georges Heilbrun, Marc Lotie and his compatriot Galanti, who was said to have quantities of superb books piled up in his minute apartment. These years in Paris were decisive in forming Chiesa's taste. He learnt his trade there, and began to deal in books and manuscripts.

On his return to Milan he opened his first shop in 1953 in Piazza Sant'Andrea, moving in 1956 to rooms facing a courtyard in a Renaissance palazzo in Via Bigli. Here he remained, publishing no catalogues but compiling long and erudite descriptions of the books he had for sale. He



supplied major books to many notable collectors, including Otto Schärer, of Schweinfurt, Giuseppe Ghersi, of Zürich, and Gianmario Feltrinelli. In close collaboration with W. H. Jackson, Harvard's "grand accumulator", and later with Roger Stoddard, he built up the Houghton Library's holdings of Italian literature.

His connoisseurship spanned the whole range of Italian book production, but the 15th and 16th centuries were of especial interest to him. His taste was individual. He preferred, for example, the Venetian printers Francesco Marcolini and Niccolò Zaccaria, to Zoppino, to the far better known Aldine press. He was a regular attendee at the major auctions in Paris, London and New York, and a brave bidder, latterly defeating all competition to win back Prezzi's *Quattrino*, the masterpiece of Florentine woodcut illustration.

His knowledge was much in demand. He served as one of the original trustees of the Premio Feltrinelli, which rewarded works of bibliography and was founded in memory of the great German-Italian printer Giovanni Mardersteig. He acted as adviser on conservation to the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, and represented both Italy and the antiquarian booksellers on the Council of the International Bibliophiles' Association. But these public duties were minor by comparison with his services to individuals. He had a wide international circle of devoted friends, captivated by his sweetness of character. No request for help from distant or visiting scholars was ever refused. Absurd questions were answered, references books were found and dispatched (payment usually being rejected), access to minor libraries was arranged and custodians were assured that their visitors could be trusted to handle rare volumes. Tammara de Marinis, the veteran bookseller, bibliophile and bibliographer, regarded Chiesa in some ways as a successor, and Chiesa willingly accompanied him on his journeys.

In 1961 Chiesa married Elena De Hirschel. The marriage was an extremely happy one. Visitors to Milan were generously and charmingly entertained by the Chiasas, at meals enlivened by Carlo Alberto's delicious sense of humour and anecdotes of the book world. He is survived by his wife and their four sons.

PROFESSOR JOHN GOLIGHER

Professor John Goligher, chairman of the department of surgery at Leeds University, 1954-77, died on January 18 aged 85. He was born on March 13, 1912.

JOHN GOLIGHER was one of the great figures in British surgery. He had an enormous dedication to his discipline and the well-being of his patients. He enjoyed a national and international reputation, and was considered by many to be the pre-eminent colon and rectal surgeon of his time.

John Cedric Goligher was born in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, where he was educated at Foyle College. He chose the University of Edinburgh for his medical studies and graduated MB, ChB in 1934. He was appointed to a house officer post at the Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh, and gained the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1938. In 1948 he became a Master of Surgery (ChM) of the University of Edinburgh.

In the early years of the Second World War he was first house surgeon and subsequently resident surgical officer at St Mark's Hospital, then a small postgraduate hospital in London specialising in diseases of the colon and rectum (now St Mark's Hospital, Northwick Park). Thus began an association which was to continue through 43 years as an honorary consultant (later emeritus) surgeon to St Mark's.

In 1941 Goligher began a five-year tour in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He was a surgical specialist and, being a paratrooper, was officer-in-charge of an airborne surgical team serving in both Greece and Italy. He rose to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. After his military service, he had a short spell as a senior registrar at St Mary's Hospital. In 1947 he was appointed honorary assistant surgeon to St Mark's and St Mary's hospitals.

In 1954, having established himself firmly in London surgical practice, he made the relatively unconventional, yet far-sighted, move to become professor of surgery and chairman of the university department of surgery at Leeds. There he had a distinguished career as a clinical academic and writer and, above all, as a thoughtful and hardworking surgeon. Over the next 23 years his department became a leading centre of academic gastro-intestinal surgery.

Goligher trained many young surgeons who were to become leaders in coloproctology at home and abroad, instilling in them a fierce loyalty to him and his techniques. His unit received a constant stream of visitors — both young surgeons in training and those already established. The specially constructed viewing gallery in his theatre was rarely empty through the sometimes marathon Monday and Thursday operating sessions. Many of



the foreign visitors returned to their own countries to develop units along similar lines to that which they had observed in Leeds.

Goligher ensured that his clinical work was always critically evaluated and methodically audited. He enriched academic surgery by his analytical skills and his scrupulous honesty of reporting. His often pioneering work resulted in the publication of many papers and contributions to surgical meetings at home and overseas.

Goligher was in great demand as a visiting professor and lecturer in Europe, North America and at home. He was a powerful speaker whose enthusiasm for his subject was

translations, this reference book became the most influential text in the field.

Goligher's supreme ability as a clinician underpinned all that he did in other areas. He dispensed the highest standard of care and rightly expected the same from those around him. A shy and somewhat self-effacing man, he was held in affection both by his staff and by his patients. An occasion on which he went out at lunchtime to buy books for a chronically ill young boy in his care was typical of his kindness. In retirement he established a most successful private practice.

Goligher served on the council of the Royal College of Surgeons in England for 12 years (1968-80); was president of the Royal Society of Medicine Section of Proctology (1962); president of the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland (1974); and president of the British Society of Gastroenterology (1975). Honorary fellowships and doctorates from around the world reflected the esteem in which he was held by his professional peers.

His interests outside surgery included reading, classical music and — appropriately for an intestinal specialist — gastronomy and oenology. His speed of driving was well known, and feared by all who had travelled with him.

In 1952 he married Nancy Williams, an Australian whom he met when she was an Almoner on his ward at St Mary's. She survives him with their son and two daughters.

Church news

Recent church appointments include:
The Rev Peter Bowles, Team Rector, Old Brompton and Lonsdale Green (Derby), to be Priest-in-Charge, Hope and Castleton, Bradwell St Barnabas (same diocese).
The Rev Christopher Harrison, Priest-in-Charge, Ferry Bentley, Kiveton, Thorpe and Tinsington; Parwich with Alsop-on-Dale (Derby), to be also Rural Dean of Ashbourne (same diocese).
The Rev Steve Hellyer, Curate, Nottingham St Nicholas (Southwell), to be Priest-in-Charge, Oxford St Matthew (Oxford).
The Rev Michael Hills, Team Vicar, Seaton Hirst with special responsibility for St Andrew (Newcastle), to be Chaplain to the Royal Naval School, HMS Raleigh, Gosport.
The Rev Stephen Huckle, Vicar, Ferry Stratford (Oxford), to be Vicar, Stribley The Ascension (Birmingham).
The Rev Keith Justice, Assistant

Curate, Dovercourt and Parkenton with Harwich (Chelmsford), to be Vicar, Wenworth, and part-time Chaplain, Rotherham District General Hospital (Sheffield).
The Rev Carol Kitchener, NSM, Biggin Hill (Rochester), to be also part-time Assistant Chaplain, Bromley NHS Trust (same diocese).
The Rev Elizabeth Mason, NSM, Swan Team (Oxford), to be Team Vicar, same benefice.
Canon Robert Parsons, Canon Precentor, Cathedral Church of All Saints, Derby, to be Priest-in-Charge, Belper St Peter (same diocese).
The Rev David Paton-Williams, Chaplain, University College of Ripon and York St John, and Minor Canon of Ripon Cathedral; to be Rector, Bedale, and Priest-in-Charge, Leeming (same diocese).
The Rev Jacques Peal, Curate, Crayford (Rochester), to be Curate, Dardoff Holy Trinity (same diocese).

The Rev Margaret Saunders, Chaplain, Milton Keynes Hospital (Oxford), to be Curate (known as Associate Rector), Newport Pagnell with Lathbury and Moulsoe (same diocese).
The Rev James Stewart, Curate, The Fountains Group (Ripon), to be Vicar, Catterick (same diocese).
The Rev Tina Stirling, Curate (Team Vicar designate), Thame with Towse (Oxford), to be Priest-in-Charge, Brill, Boarstall, Chilton and Dorton (same diocese).
The Rev Ainsley Swift, Assistant Curate, Prescott (Liverpool), to be Team Vicar, New Windsor Team with special responsibility for St Stephen and St Agnes (Oxford).
The Rev Tony Tooty, Curate, Offerton with Boughton (Southwell), to be Vicar, Gillingham (Bradford).
The Rev Jeremy Trigge, Team Vicar, Wolverton Holy Trinity and St George the Martyr (Oxford), to be Team Rector, same benefice.

The Rev Richard Tucker, Team Vicar, Dronfield with Holmesfield (Derby), to be Vicar, Sutton Coldfield St Columba (Birmingham).
The Rev Tim Tunley, Curate, Knaresborough (Ripon), to be Vicar, Swaledale (same diocese).
The Rev Paul Waters, Team Vicar, Wickford and Runwell, and Chaplain, Runwell Hospital (Chelmsford), to be Chaplain, QMC University Hospital NHS Trust (Southwell).
Retirements:
The Rev Ann Barnett, Vicar, Steinernedale Church at the Centre (Liverpool), on June 30.
The Rev Harry Bloomfield, Vicar, Kennington St Swinburn (Oxford), on May 31.
The Rev John Clarke, NSM, Priest-in-Charge, Stanley All Saints and St Andrew (Derby), on April 3.
The Rev Barry Dawson, Vicar, Attenborough St Mary the Virgin (Southwell), on October 31.

14,000 TONS ON GERMANY
DRESDEN AGAIN
AIR BLOWS AFFECT
BOTH FRONTS

From Our Aeronautical Correspondent
About 14,000 tons of bombs fell on Germany — the vast majority on railway and other transport targets — during the 36 hours ended at dusk last night. They were dropped in a series of coordinated blows by day and night aimed by between 12,000 and 13,000 allied aircraft based in Britain, Italy, Holland, Belgium, and France.

The air raids ranged from the heavy four-engined bombers of R.A.F. Bomber Command and the United States 8th Air Force to the medium and light bombers of the United States 9th Air Force, the fighter-bombers of the allied air forces on the Continent, and the fighters and intruders escorting the great bomber fleets.

ON THIS DAY
February 16, 1945

The destruction of Dresden still arouses controversy. More than 150,000 people were killed in the raids. As well as being condemned on humane grounds, Bomber Command's strategy was questioned.

Fortresses and Liberators on the following day, yesterday received its third heavy attack in 36 hours. It was the principal target for more than 1,100 United States 8th Air Force bombers, some of which bombed another important railway centre — Cottbus — between Dresden and Frankfurt-on-Oder, and one of the few remaining German synthetic oil plants at Magdeburg. More than 450 Mustang fighters escorted the bombers.

air offensive had also been shown a few hours earlier, when Bomber Command, for the second night running, sent out over 1,300 heavy bombers, of which 22 are missing, although some may have landed on the Continent.

The majority were used for a double attack on Chemnitz, one of the biggest industrial cities in Saxony, which had been heavily bombed in daylight on Wednesday by part of the great fleet of American bombers. Halifaxes and Lancasters dropped some 730,000 incendiaries. In addition to many 4,000 and 8,000 pounders and other high-explosive bombs in their two attacks. The immediate importance of Chemnitz is that it is a vital base for the defence of eastern Germany. Other R.A.F. targets on Wednesday night were a synthetic oil plant at Rostitz, south of Leipzig, and Berlin. Duisburg, Mainz, Nuremberg, and Dessau.

Dresden was still burning when Chemnitz received their pounding. The two centres are only 35 miles apart, and the damage to the first had made the other of even greater importance to the enemy's sorely tried transport system. Chemnitz is believed to have been used by the enemy as a supply and reinforcement centre for the Wehrmacht. It also contains important industries, notably textiles, as well as being one of the main railway centres for Saxony.

هذه من الاجل

TEST TARGET

England need 225 to beat West Indies after Headley's efforts
PAGE 27

RUNNING MAN

Why Maurice Greene leaves the fast talkers behind
PAGE 32

LYNNE TRUSS

Love is blind when it comes to football
PAGE 33

SWEPT ASIDE

Britain's hopes of a curling medal slip away
PAGE 26

TIMES SPORT

MONDAY FEBRUARY 16 1998

CUP EMBARRASSMENT FOR SCHMEICHEL AND UNITED



Schmeichel, the United goalkeeper, tries desperately to make up for his blunder, but fails to prevent Hendrie from putting Barnsley into the lead yesterday. Photograph: Rui Vieira. Report, page 28

Gullit has eyes on Feyenoord

BY MATT DICKINSON

RUUD GULLIT had talked of a break from football, but it lasted precisely three days. The former Chelsea manager yesterday watched Sparta Rotterdam play SC Heerenveen, fuelling speculation of a speedy return to the Dutch game.

Feyenoord, the club with which he first won honours and where he is an honorary life member, made the first public bid for his services at the weekend. Leo Beenhakker is due to stand down as coach at the end of the season. "It is too early to make any firm decisions, but an offer from Feyenoord will be welcome," Gullit said.

More likely, however, is the chance to take over the Holland national team after the World Cup in France this year, although Gullit turned down an unofficial approach several weeks before he was sacked by Chelsea last Thursday.

He may be more amenable to the idea now. He is completing a Dutch coaching certificate course and would enjoy working alongside his former international colleague, Ronald Koeman, assistant to Guus Hiddink, the Holland manager.

Much could depend on Gullit's price of £2 million a year after tax. His hopes of returning to work could also be hampered if he pursues a threat to sue Chelsea for wrongful dismissal.

Graham Rix, the Chelsea coach, said yesterday that he believed Gullit had been struggling under the strain of managing the side. Rix claimed that he had seen Gullit banging his fist against his forehead at half-time during his last game in charge, the 2-0 FA Cup Premier League defeat against Arsenal.

"It was clear to me things weren't going as well as his cool exterior suggested," Rix said. "I was desperate for him to ask me for help, but he never asked. It was heart-breaking. It is probably for the best because we [Chelsea] had gone badly off the rails. I'm not sure Ruud could have halted the slide."

Gullit's successor, Gianluca Vialli, will hear within a fortnight whether he has lured Brian Laudrup to Stamford Bridge. The Rangers winger, who was dropped at the weekend, will decide in the next 14 days about a move to Chelsea, AS Monaco or Ajax.

Vialli also has spoken to a former Juventus team-mate, David Platt, of Arsenal, although Platt denied suggestions that they had discussed a coaching role.



Gullit struggled lately.

Barnsley block the route to Newcastle

BY OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

AFTER the heroics of Stevenage Borough in the last round of the FA Cup, Barnsley, the team rooted to the foot of the FA Cup Premier League, carried the banner for romantics everywhere yesterday when they held Manchester United to a 1-1 draw at Old Trafford. It ensured that they remained in the draw for the sixth round, where they face the prospect of a trip to face Newcastle United.

The performance of Danny Wilson's team, and the unexpected advent of a replay at Oakwell in ten days' time, overshadowed the Cup draw and the assumption that it had provided football with a battle of the giants in the pairing of Newcastle and United. It also forced the postponement of the testimonial game that United had been planning to raise money for the families of victims of the Munich air crash. Eric Cantona will have to wait a little longer for his triumphant return to Manchester.

The prospect of a clash between Newcastle and United, though, is still something to whet the appetite: another showdown between Alex Ferguson and Kenny Dalglish; a reprise of the fine league match at St James' Park earlier in the season, when a wonderful header from Andy Cole decided a passionate match.

Terry McDermott, the Newcastle assistant manager, said: "It's going to be tough whoever we meet. Manchester United are the best team in the country at the moment and Barnsley are really battling. There are easier ties. But we'll



FA CUP

Arsenal failed 29
Full results guide 30
Harford's return 31
Blooming youth 36

be playing at St James' Park and we have to be delighted with that."

If Barnsley, who profited from a dreadful error from Peter Schmeichel, the United goalkeeper, yesterday, emerge as the victors, the tie of the next round could be between Arsenal and Blackburn Rovers, if they manage to negotiate Crystal Palace and West Ham United respectively.

Arsenal stumbled to a goalless draw with Palace at Highbury yesterday, and Arsène Wenger, their manager, did not seek solace in the prospect of a home tie in the next round. "We did not beat Port Vale at Highbury and now we have not beaten

Palace," he said. "Why should we beat West Ham or Blackburn?"

The big winners in the draw were Coventry City, who were paired at home to Sheffield United in the only clear tie of the round. Leeds United, too, will be happy with their fate after the draw raised the possibility that they will face a Nationwide League first division team at Elland Road for the fourth time in succession. If Wolverhampton Wanderers beat Wimbledon in their replay at Molineux, they will be the visitors to Yorkshire.

All eyes, though, will be on the outcome of the Barnsley v Manchester United replay, if only because of its timing — three days before United's

morning kick-off against Chelsea in the Premiership and a week before the first leg of their Champions' League quarter-final, against AS Monaco. Barnsley must have more than an even chance.

"We will only have one replay in the Cup this season, son," Ferguson said after the game yesterday, "and that will be the last one. I'm looking forward to the replay at Oakwell. I have never taken a team there and I suppose it will be one of those cold, Yorkshire nights."

The FA Cup is good for us. It gives you a different kind of excitement and it helps young players like Michael Clegg. He has come on a bundle, that boy, and it will be a great tie up there. It was a penalty kick at the end for them, but there is a general reluctance among referees now to give them and Barnsley suffered because of that."

Wilson, predictably, was delighted with his team's performance at the scene of their humbling earlier in the season and was relishing United's first visit to Oakwell for 34 years. "Of course, we are delighted about the result," he said. "We thought we had a clear penalty, but maybe the luck evened itself out because a mistake by Peter Schmeichel is a rarity in itself."

"Our players were very determined today. They wanted to show that the 7-0 result last year was not really a true reflection of our club. They put that right and this result will lift everybody and give us confidence for the fight in the league."

FA CUP QUARTER-FINALS	
Crystal Palace or Arsenal v Blackburn Rovers or West Ham United	
Coventry City v Sheffield United	
Leeds United v Wolverhampton Wanderers or Wimbledon	
Newcastle United v Barnsley or Manchester United	
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OPINION

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CONTENTS

LETTERS

THE FAIR

MOON TODAY

Chess on ice makes compelling viewing as Britons miss out

THE lads and lasses of Scottish curling are away, back to their farms, their drawing board, computer and sales jobs, without a medal, but rest assured, curling is a triumph of the Winter Olympics. The gold medals, hard won by Switzerland's men and Canada's women, came at the end of a compelling and sustained tournament that gave the Games an indoor shelter from inclement weather. It fitted like a warm slipper.

Yesterday, Kirsty Hay, skip of the Great Britain women, almost apologised for failing at the very last to grasp what had so tantalisingly promised to be Britain's likeliest medal of these Olympics. Forget the

Taking Part; failure hurt. Forget the quips about men with brooms; this was skilled, authentic competition.

Dougie Dryburgh, the Great Britain men's skip, took out a team that talked about medals and finished seventh. Hay's women talked about doing their best and came within a single stone of eliminating Canada in the semi-final.

"You live and learn," was Hay's philosophical comment after losing yesterday's bronze medal play-off 10-6 to Sweden. "We were more or less outplayed from the first end. We made tactical errors and, after 5-5, we missed good stones. It's been a huge learning experience, one I'd like to take into the world championships, if a new generation does not come on to thump us off the ice."

The young might indeed be tempted after seeing the "chess on ice" contests on television, but Hay's reproachful tone is not necessary after her team's tenacity in coming from behind in matches. Sandra Schmirler, the formidable Canada skip, was heard to say

FROM ROB HUGHES IN NAGANO



in the relief at beating Britain in an eleventh end play-off: "Hey, we're guys! That was not much fun."

Schmirler was the player of the tournament. She formed her team in Saskatchewan seven years ago. She cajoled, nursed and bullied them on the ice. Her nerve and aim in drawing stones under intense fire were supreme. And she had taken time out

since retaining her individual world title last year to give birth to her first child.

Sometimes exceeding 90 per cent accuracy, plotting and either blocking or attacking as a foursome, Canada mastered Denmark in the final, though the Danish success in reaching that level is commendable, given that they practise abroad. There is no curling rink in Denmark.

Switzerland's 9-3 victory over Canada in the men's final defied predictions and brought such emotion that the entire Swiss team burst into uncontrolled sobs. They became gold medal-winners, with Juan Antonio Samaranch, the International

Olympic Committee (IOC) president, putting the medals around their necks and the IOC seal of approval on a game that turned out to be a mature gift to Olympicism.

Mike Harris, the Canada skip, exemplified the spirit with heartfelt embraces of his conquerors. With 20,000 curling arenas, Canada expects and, with a potential explosion of this sport around the world, the Royal Caledonian Curling Club, which laid down rules in 1838, might rue the day that it put curling on the map and might now see a growth abroad that it has no powers to match.

That, I suppose, is the British for you: inventing, exporting, being left behind.



Katie Laudon, left, Hay and Jackie Lockhart reflect on their narrow failure to win an Olympic medal

Bobsleigh gold is shared for first time

FROM CHRIS MOORE IN NAGANO

FOR the first time in Olympic history, the gold medal for the two-man bobsleigh was shared after a tie yesterday. Guenther Huber, of Italy, and Pierre Leenders, of Canada, were never separated for more than 0.05sec on any of the four runs down the 1,700-metre spiral track.

Huber held a 0.03sec advantage going into the deciding run, having led Leenders by 0.04sec overnight, yet they finished with identical aggregate times of 3min 37.24sec after Leenders won the final run by 0.03sec in 54.24sec.

Thirty years ago, at the 1968 Olympic Games in Grenoble, Eugenio Monti, of Italy, and Horst Floth, of Germany, tied, but Monti was awarded the gold medal because he had the faster final run. However, five years later, it was decided at the Sports Congress in Lake Placid that, in any future dead-heats, the gold medal would be shared.

Yesterday was the first occasion that any gold medal has been shared in two-man or four-man competitions at the Olympic Games, world championships or European championships. It was also the first time for 36 years that the two-man gold has not been won outright by a European country.

"It's unbelievable. I just can't believe it," Leenders said as he hugged his brakeman, David MacEachern. "Every race was a hundredth of a second job and before the final run I went up to Guenther and said: 'C'mon, you imagine if we ended up tying for the gold medal?' I was joking because I never really thought it could happen, but I must have a sixth sense."

Huber admitted that he was unsure of the outcome as he and Antonio Tartaglia pulled up at the finish. "Everyone was jumping up and down shouting and screaming and I didn't know if we had won the gold or the silver," he said.

"Then I suddenly realised it was gold for both and remembered what Pierre had said in the start-house. We joked we should go together so a gold medal for us both is the perfect result."

Christopher Langan and Markus Zimmermann, of Germany, who set the fastest time of the competition on the third run with 54.15sec off the best start time of 4.95sec, won the bronze, 0.65sec behind the leaders.

Sean Olsson, captain of the Great Britain team, and his brakeman, Leary Paul, reserved their best run until last with the seventh-fastest final time of 54.73sec to finish fifth. Lee Johnston, the driver who qualified to compete in the Olympics only three weeks ago, was twentieth, with Eric Sekwalor.

Winter Olympic Games: Daehlie closes in on record haul of medals

Real drama in episode of neighbours

FROM ROB HUGHES

AFTER each victory at the Winter Olympic Games, the medal-winners are honoured by a "flower ceremony" giving them something to hold and the people on the mountain something to cheer before everyone congregates in Central Square for the real medal ritual after dark. By the end of these Games, Bjorn Daehlie will have had enough flowers to start a market garden back home in Norway.

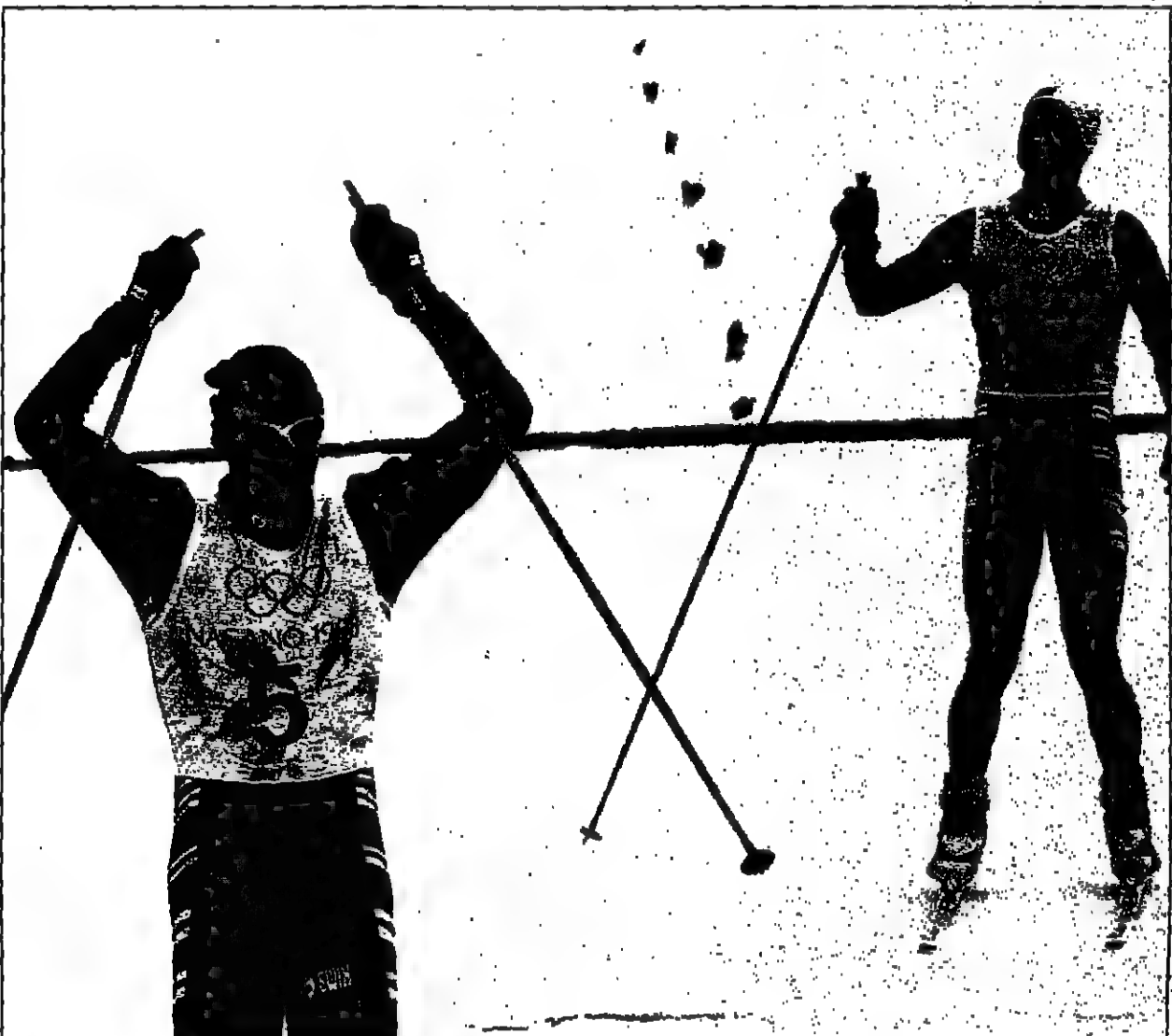
He stands already at the top of the podium as the greatest male accumulator of medals in Winter Olympics history. Daehlie is the master of cross-country skiing, where the pulse is slower than alpine racers but where the demands are heavy on endurance, rhythm and, sometimes, the loneliness of being stalked for miles.

On skis, Daehlie knows the breaking point of every competitor and of his own resources. To watch him, you see a man who has encountered mist, too much snow, too little wind, rain and lightning and there is real fear that the alpine programme will not be completed. Meanwhile, foul though the slush and melting ice has been in Snow Harp, the marathon skiers have trudged on.

Last Monday, Daehlie finished twentieth in the 30 kilometre race won by Mike Myllylä, of Finland. Some questioned if the reign was over, if the outstanding cross-country skier of his generation was out of puff. Wax was the answer. Daehlie had been waxing his skis with the wrong stuff for the prevailing conditions, which is like the Williams Formula One cars choosing the wrong tyres in the wet at Monaco.

By Thursday, well waxed, he won the Classic ten kilometre, after receiving, he said, a phone call from Mrs Daehlie reminding him: "You forgot that to win, you must go a bit faster than the others."

The humour is dry, the shrug of triumph modest. Daehlie accepts the law of competition that the further you go on, the more someone is waiting to take you. It happened on Saturday when, though he led the 15 kilometre race from the start, he felt the breath on his neck from just over half-distance of a pursuer. Kilometre by kilometre, he was stalked by a younger man, by a neighbour from the



Alsgaard crosses the line ahead of Daehlie to win the 15 kilometre cross-country race. Photograph: Joe Cavaretta

their houses — and won the sprint by a second in a race time of 1hr 7min 1.7sec. Alsgaard is 26, Daehlie 30, but rather than assume that his time has come, the younger man said: "Bjorn is a great skier. I think he will continue to dominate cross country as long as he skis."

Daehlie told white lies. No, he wasn't disappointed at all. No, he didn't keep a score of gold or silver medals. "When you don't win and you see why, it's quite easy to accept," he said. And Alsgaard then

made an easy promise. He would try to help Daehlie to his seventh gold in the team relay on Thursday, after which it will be up to Daehlie himself to carry off the 50 kilometre final on Saturday.

By winning six golds, Daehlie has equalled Lyubov Yegorova — but she was disgraced after testing positive for drugs last year. His haul of six gold and four silver betters the four gold, five silver, one bronze of Raisa Smetanina. The only other Winter Olympian to wear as many medals

is Lydia Skoblikova, a speedskater from the Soviet Union in the 1960s.

As a child, Daehlie "chewed" skiing, preferring ski jumping until he tackled his coach — his own father — and tried something new. "Of course, it's fantastic," he answers to eulogies, "but I think I will appreciate it more in a few years, when I'm a grandfather watching old videos."

Watching him, live, was Akko Maruyama, a fan, who said: "I came to see Daehlie — it's raining, it's icy cold and I would be here in any weather."

The Japanese can admire, but the fact that it is a close neighbour who dogs Daehlie is a statement in itself that Winter Games are for a select sector of the world. A third of mankind sees no snow. In addition to that, Daehlie is talking advantage of a unique period of three Olympics in six

years that have coincided with his people.

After last week's victory, he waited 20 minutes at the finish for Philip Bök, the first Kenyan Winter Olympian, to stagger into his arms. "Well done," Daehlie said. "You are a champion."

We shared that momentary gesture, but later, appreciated that Nike, the sportswear manufacturer, had manipulated Bök's move from summer to winter, from Kenya runner to Nagano skier.

Putting a runner on to skis was a marketing ploy for which Nike paid Bök and a colleague to live in Finland, on top of \$250,000 training costs.

"Nike always felt sports shouldn't have boundaries," is the official line. "People forget Nike is a business and our business is getting attention," is the reality. Nike could not have arranged a better photocall than Bök collapsing into the hands of the man who is one long stride away from becoming the most decorated Winter Olympian in history.

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Golden jump delights Japan

IN SAITAMA: Leaping towards a sea of Japanese flags, Kazuyoshi Funaki realised the hopes of a nation yesterday when he clinched the large-hill ski-jumping gold medal with a superb second jump of 132.5 metres.

Masahiko Harada, his team-mate, who has twice let Olympic gold slip, redeemed himself with a hill record second jump of 136 metres, weak on style points but good enough to move up to a bronze medal behind Jari Soukainen, of Finland, the winner of the competition on the smaller hill.

Old routine

IN ICE SKATING: Pairs: Grigoriy Yegorov and Yekaterina Platonova, the favourites in ice dancing, led their usual challenges. Anzhelika Bryukhina and Oleg Ovsyannikov, their counterparts, after the overnight loss and the original dance yesterday, took the lead in the short programme, but they were edged out by a technically superb free skate on Saturday that featured a grand and tight triple.

Czechs cash in

IN ICE HOCKEY: Russia and the Czech Republic each scored their second victories in the round that determines pairings for the quarter-finals. Russia beat Finland 4-3 and the Czechs drubbed Kazakhstan 8-2. Early today, the Russians faced the Czechs and winless Finland and Kazakhstan were to meet. Unbeaten Canada played the United States (1-1) and Sweden (1-1) faced Belarus (0-2).

Dutch double

IN SPEED SKATING: Long considered masters of long distance races, Holland gained a sprint victory yesterday when Ido Postma won the 1,000 metres in an Olympic record time 1min 10.64sec, with Jan Bos, his team-mate, taking the silver medal, 0.07sec behind. Hiroyasu Shimizu, of Japan, the 500 metres gold medal-winner, won the bronze.

Skiing finale

IN SKIING: The beleaguered organisers of the skiing event pinned their hopes of clearing the backlog of races on a three-race programme today, taking in the super-giant slalom for men and two downhill runs for women — a gold medal race and one half of the combined event. The slalom portion will be held tomorrow.

RESULTS AND DETAILS FROM NAGANO

BIATHLON

WOMEN: 7.5km (mixed targets in brackets): 1. G. Koubileva (Rus) 22min 08.0sec (11); 2. U. Uus (Fin) 22:08.7 (11); 3. K. Aul (Ger) 22:22.4 (11); 4. S. Mikulova (Slovakia) 22:23.1 (11); 5. Y. S. Shum (Chn) 22:40.0 (9); 6. A. S. S. (Fin) 22:53.1 (2); 7. M. Schwechthorn (Slovakia) 22:54.1 (1); 8. M. Lavey (Fin) 22:55.2 (2); 9. A. Munrova (Slovakia) 22:56.7 (2); 10. N. S. (Sov) 22:59.0 (1); 11. E. P. (Sov) 24:04.0 (1); 12. A. G. (Sov) 24:05.2 (1).

BOBSLEIGHING

TWO-MAN: (positions after final run): 1. Italy (G. Huber, A. Tartaglia) 54.51sec; 54.25; 54.17; 54.27; 3min 37.24sec; Canada (P. Leenders, D. MacEachern) 54.58; 54.26; 54.16; 54.24; 3min 37.24; 3. Germany (C. Langan, M. Zimmermann) 54.68; 54.68; 54.11; 54.34; 3min 37.24; 4. Switzerland (C. Reich, C. Grand) 54.73; 54.58; 54.32; 54.54; 3min 37.24; 5. Latvia (S. P. (Sov) 54.77; 54.44; 54.39; 3min 37.27; 6. United States (J. Johnston, R. Johnston) 54.81; 54.70; 54.48; 54.39; 3min 38.23; 7. Czech Republic (P. F. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82.

54.80; 54.48; 54.64; 3min 38.23; 8. France (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 9. Sweden (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 10. Norway (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 11. Switzerland (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 12. Austria (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 13. Germany (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 14. Canada (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 15. Italy (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 16. France (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 17. Sweden (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 18. Norway (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 19. Switzerland (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23; 20. Austria (S. M. (Sov) 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 54.82; 3min 38.23.

ICE SKATING

WOMEN: Free programme: 1. K. (Rus) 1.0; 2. A. (Rus) 1.0; 3. A. (Rus) 1.0; 4. A. (Rus) 1.0; 5. A. (Rus) 1.0; 6. A. (Rus) 1.0; 7. A. (Rus) 1.0; 8. A. (Rus) 1.0; 9. A. (Rus) 1.0; 10. A. (Rus) 1.0; 11. A. (Rus) 1.0; 12. A. (Rus) 1.0; 13. A. (Rus) 1.0; 14. A. (Rus) 1.0; 15. A. (Rus) 1.0; 16. A. (Rus) 1.0; 17. A. (Rus) 1.0; 18. A. (Rus) 1.0; 19. A. (Rus) 1.0; 20. A. (Rus) 1.0.

ICE DANCE: Positions after original dance: 1. P. (Rus) and E. (Rus) 1.0; 2. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 3. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 4. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 5. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 6. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 7. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 8. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 9. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 10. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 11. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 12. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 13. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 14. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 15. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 16. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 17. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 18. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 19. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0; 20. A. (Rus) and O. (Rus) 1.0.

SKI JUMPING

INDIVIDUAL: 1. K. (Rus) 1.0; 2. A. (Rus) 1.0; 3. A. (Rus) 1.0; 4. A. (Rus) 1.0; 5. A. (Rus) 1.0; 6. A. (Rus) 1.0; 7. A. (Rus) 1.0; 8. A. (Rus) 1.0; 9. A. (Rus) 1.0; 10. A. (Rus) 1.0; 11. A. (Rus) 1.0; 12. A. (Rus) 1.0; 13. A. (Rus) 1.0; 14. A. (Rus) 1.0; 15. A. (Rus) 1.0; 16. A. (Rus) 1.0; 17. A. (Rus) 1.0; 18. A. (Rus) 1.0; 19. A. (Rus) 1.0; 20. A. (Rus) 1.0.

NORDIC SKIING

WOMEN: 15km parallel: 1. T. (Rus) 1.0; 2. A. (Rus) 1.0; 3. A. (Rus) 1.0; 4. A. (Rus) 1.0; 5. A. (Rus) 1.0; 6. A. (Rus) 1.0; 7. A. (Rus) 1.0; 8. A. (Rus) 1.0; 9. A. (Rus) 1.0; 10. A. (Rus) 1.0; 11. A. (Rus) 1.0; 12. A. (Rus) 1.0; 13. A. (Rus) 1.0; 14. A. (Rus) 1.0; 15. A. (Rus) 1.0; 16. A. (Rus) 1.0; 17. A. (Rus) 1.0; 18. A. (Rus) 1.0; 19. A. (Rus) 1.0; 20. A. (Rus) 1.0.

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BASKETBALL

White on target as Towers falter

By Nicholas Harling

THE phenomenal shooting of John White gave the Leopards' defence of their Budweiser League title further credibility last night when he helped them to a significant 93-83 victory over London Towers in the London Arena.

White's 37 points included seven three-pointers, four of which came during a remarkable spell in the second quarter when he collected 16 successive points for the champions, who led 50-46 at the interval.

The game between the capital's top clubs had started as a battle for domination of the rebounds between the respective big men, but it soon developed into a contest involving the specialists from long-range.

No sooner had Eric Burks and Brian Moore hit two three-pointers for the Leopards than Paul Deppisch replied with the first two of his four for the Towers. Keith Robinson did likewise. Yet when the Leopards eventually edged away and took control, it was surprisingly with no help from White.

Makekeba Perry, Ryan Cuff and Burks were their scorers in a late 11-2 burst that brought joy to Billy Mims, their coach, and despair to Kevin Cadle, of London Towers.

There is little love lost between the various title contenders. On Saturday, Mims had incurred the wrath of Sheffield Sharks by suggesting after their 95-78 victory at Crystal Palace that they should have been penalised for their late arrival. The game started 35 minutes behind schedule after the Sheffield coach driver had taken them on a magical mystery tour to the National Sports Centre via Gatwick, all of which met with little sympathy from Mims.

"I was appalled that Palace weren't given some kind of start from the free-throw," he said. "When I was coaching in Ireland, they hit teams who arrived late from the free-throw line."

Sheffield almost lost their way in the match as well. Palace, down by 56-42, clawed back to 73-71 when Eric Cardenas tipped in, but the big Panamanian newcomer could not manage another field goal. Finishing with 27 points, he conceded the honour of top-scoring to John Amaechi, whose 29 points dug the Sharks out of their hole.

Worthing Bears ended a run of 19 successive defeats by beating Derby Storm 84-75 on Saturday and Watford Royals 93-87, with Gregg Francis collecting 24 points in each game.



Greene, who celebrated another victory at the Bupa grand prix in Birmingham yesterday, aims to take sprinting to a higher level

Greene slips out of the shadows

By David Powell, Athletics Correspondent

MAURICE GREENE is the world champion in the 100 metres and, as of this month, the world record-holder indoors over 60 metres, but somehow he does not fit the role. Where is the brashness, the arrogance, that goes with being the fastest man of the moment? He even winced yesterday when asked about his nickname, the Kansas Cannonball.

If we think of the 100 metres champions of recent times — Carl Lewis, Linford Christie, Donovan Bailey — we recall attitude in abundance. Greene is different, confident and ambitious but quiet by comparison. "Really easy-going," Andy Miller, his physiotherapist, said. "Easy to get along with."

Not easy to keep up with, though. Greene was in Birmingham yesterday defending his unbeaten indoor record for the winter, a season in which he first equalled the 60 metres world record of 6.45sec in Stuttgart, then broke it with 6.39sec in Madrid two weeks ago. Competing in the Bupa grand prix at the national indoor arena, he won again, this time in 6.47sec.

Any suggestion that Greene might prove a one-season wonder can be eliminated. Perhaps sponsors might begin to believe in him soon. He has not picked up one new backer since he surprised almost everybody with his victory over Bailey, the Olympic champion and world record-holder, in the 100 metres at the world championships in Athens last August. For the first time since 1991, a

United States athlete was world No 1 over 100 metres. "You cannot get instant recognition for doing one thing," Greene, 23, said. "I did not expect to get recognised like Carl Lewis after that happened. After all the things Michael Johnson had done, you did not really know him until after he broke the 200 metres world record and won the gold in the 400 at the Olympics. It will take a while."

It was the International Amateur Athletic Federation that gave Greene the cannonball sobriquet. Does he like the nickname? He laughed, fumbling for words. "It's OK," he said reluctantly, "but

my friends call me Mo Better — because I do it more better than anybody else." Few outside the United States had noticed Greene until last year. At the 1995 world championships in Gothenburg, he qualified for the United States team, but was eliminated in the quarter-finals. In 1996, he did not even make the 100 metres team for the Olympic Games in Atlanta and finished the year ranked No 28 in the world. On the grand prix circuit, he was more likely to be found in B races than in the main events. Having been with the same coach, Al Hobson, since he was eight years old, Greene sensed a change

might be for the good. He drove with his father to Los Angeles to seek the help of John Smith, who coached Quincy Watts, Kevin Young and Marie-José Pérec to Olympic titles. "I contacted John because he was simply the best coach around," Greene said. "You only have to look at what he has achieved to know how good he is." By June last year, within nine months of joining Smith's group, Greene had become the third-fastest American in history, behind Lewis and Leroy Burrell, winning the United States title in Sacramento in 9.90sec.

Reflecting on his move to Smith, Greene recalled: "I

would not say it was desperate. It was just something I felt I had to do. I had a pretty good season in 1995, making the world championship team, but I did not do that well in Gothenburg.

"In 1996, it was hard for me. In my first race in the Olympic trials, I ran a personal record of 10.08sec, but I could not duplicate that. Either I was going to lay down or I was going to get up and try to walk again. I felt my coach at that time had given me all the information he could. To become the sprinter I wanted to be, I had to learn new things."

His technique has improved beyond recognition. Although Greene says that he wants to take sprinting to another level, he does not beat his chest as he says it. He talks of placing no limit on how fast he can go, but speaks calmly, without making a drama of it. He has little of the overwhelming presence in public of his training partners, Ato Boldon and Jon Drummond — Boldon highly-charged, Drummond the clown of the track.

However, in training, Greene enjoys the banter. "If you go to a practice session they work very hard, but they are all joking," Miller said. And the joke is on anybody who suggests that the initials of the agency that represents Greene, HSL, must stand for Hudson Smith International (Hudson named, Smith, coach).

"No," Greene laughed. "It stands for Handling Speed Intelligently." Greene is handling the intelligence test rather well.

Record-breaker mobbed

By David Powell

ETHIOPIA came to Birmingham yesterday and had a party. Cheered on by 500 members of the newly-formed British branch of the Haile Gebrselassie Supporters' Club, the great man gave them what they had come to see — a world record in the 2,000 metres at the Bupa grand prix.

In two coaches and 17 minibuses, the Ethiopians travelled up from London to the National Indoor Arena to watch their sporting hero. All but a few were seeing him for the first time.

They were waiting for him outside the stadium, but that was a controlled welcome. After the race, with Gebrselassie, the world and Olympic

10,000 metres champion, having recorded 4min 52.86sec to take more than a second off Eamonn Coghlan's record, set in 1987, there was a pitch invasion. Officials gave up trying to chase Ethiopians, sporting their national colours, off the track. Gebrselassie was mobbed.

For British supporters, there was a good deal to cheer, too, nowhere more than in the triple jump, in which home athletics defeated a pair of gold medal-winners from the outdoor world championships in Athens last year. In the men's event, Jonathan Edwards broke the 17-year-old British record belonging to Keith

Connor, with 17.64 metres. In the women's competition, Ashia Hansen set a British and Commonwealth record. Edwards defeated Yoelvis Quesada, the Cuban who prevented him from retaining his title in Athens, and Hansen not only defeated Sarka Kasparikova, the outdoor world champion, from the Czech Republic, with her fifth round leap of 14.85 metres, she also moved up to fourth in the world all-time list.

Julian Golding sat comfortably in his role as the new British No 1 at 200 metres by registering a victory over Jon Drummond, a world championship finalist in Athens, in 20.57sec.

HOCKEY

Organ puts Olton given lesson by students

CANNOCK snatched an exciting 2-1 away victory over Reading, the title-holders, with a goal by Simon Organ yesterday to stay top of the National League premier division (Sydney Friskin writes).

The match sprang into life in the 25th minute, when Crutchley put Cannock ahead with a superbly struck goal. Reading lost Hoskin, one of their best forwards, with a cut over the left eye midway through the first half.

Pearn scored the equaliser from a chance set up by Wyatt four minutes into the second half. A ding-dong battle ensued until Organ's goal with only five minutes to spare. Still, Reading had a chance to level the score from a late short corner.

Reading were pushed into fourth position behind Cannock, Canterbury and Southgate. Canterbury romped home 5-1 against Hounslow at Chiswick with Wicken scoring three times from open play. Matthews added two goals, one from a short corner. Hounslow's only reply came from Whalley.

Elko Rutt, the Germany forward, scored on his first appearance for Southgate in their 5-0 home victory over Barford Tigers. Southgate's other scorers were Woods, Waugh, Carolan and Atala.

Beeston recovered from 4-2 behind to defeat Teddington 6-5. Guildford, at one time threatened with relegation, beat East Grinstead 2-0 at home. Jason Lee scored four goals for Old Loughtonians in the 6-2 defeat of Doncaster.

WHEN Slough, the champions, hold an eleven-point lead at the top of the women's National League premier division table, the only incentive left for the rest of the clubs this season is to set their sights on the EHA Cup and challenge for a place in the European Cup Winners' Cup (Cathy Harris writes). Of the remaining premier division sides, only Olton failed to secure a place in the last eight.

It proved to be an awful weekend for the Midlands team. Defeated 3-1 at home in the league by their local rivals, Sutton Coldfield, they came from behind to equalise against Loughborough Students, only to crash out in a penalty shoot-out.

Hightown, the cup-holders, could afford the luxury of giving their young players experience against non-league Welton, with Welsh, Bradburn and O'Donnell all scoring second-half goals after Liptrot had given the Merseysiders the lead.

There were no problems for Slough at Leicester. Nicholls completed a treble, with Brown setting twice, including a penalty, and MacDonald sealing the win. Leading 3-0 at the break, the visitors could have overwhelmed the first division leaders further, but Smith and MacDonald both missed penalty strokes.

In the league on Saturday, Clifton twice fought back to level against Slough before Nicholls and Brown struck in the last ten minutes to steer them to victory. They should wrap up their sixth title against Doncaster this week.

Results, page 39

SAILING: VOLVO TO SUPPORT NATIONAL TITLES, REGATTAS AND CLUB EVENTS

Single-handers need cash to go with the glamour

Edward Gorman puts the case for helping the sport's most demanding and exciting discipline

NO ONE would argue with the contention that the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) is doing a good job for British yacht racing. The organisation has been an active force helping to develop sailing talent — especially at youth level — and, in recent months, it has greatly improved funding for Britain's top sailors.

Last week at the Royal Thames Yacht Club in London, the RYA announced another step in the right direction — a sponsorship package from Volvo to support British youth sailing. After the decision by its parent company in Sweden to take over the title sponsorship of the Whitbread Round the World Race, Volvo UK is getting involved in sailing at a local level in this country.

The new deal involves Volvo sponsorship of a number of national championships, together with support for regional regattas and club events. The Volvo deal follows the substantial funding package announced by the RYA in the autumn — the World Class Performance Initiative — which is successfully targeting National Lottery and Sports Council funding at our top sailors, many of whom are aiming at winning gold medals at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney.

What has been consistently conspicuous by its absence, however, is support and funding for offshore single-handed racing, arguably the most demanding and exciting form of the sport. While the RYA continues to focus all its efforts on dinghy classes and Olympic disciplines, nothing is

being done to bring on the next generation of single-handers or even encourage youngsters to think of having a go at this most sublime form of yacht racing.

This is all the more puzzling given that Britain pioneered this area of the sport — now hijacked by the French — and given the fact that, over the years, easily the most famous sailors in Britain have been single-handers — Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, Sir Chay Blyth, Pete Goss and Mike Golding, to name a few.

The media finds the drama and romance of single-handed racing hard to resist and sponsors can do extremely well at relatively low cost by lending their name to a single-hander's boat.

There is no doubt that the talent exists in Britain to take on the French, but British single-handers have rarely performed well in recent years, largely because most of their time and energy is wasted trying to raise sponsorship, build boats or just make ends meet. British single-handers are crying out for the kind of help that the RYA offers those interested in more conventional forms of yacht racing.

The main reason advanced by the RYA for not doing anything for single-handed ocean racing is that solo yacht racing is technically illegal

SPORT IN BRIEF

Quickfire Dunstan in world title quest

BOXING: Terry Dunstan could be about to confirm his promise at last (Srikumar Sen writes). The Vaudhall cruiserweight, who has been out of the ring for seven months with medical and managerial problems, made an impressive return on Saturday, knocking out Alexander Gourov, of Ukraine, after 20 seconds of the first round at the Elephant and Castle to become the European champion. He now challenges Imarut Mayfield, the International Boxing Federation champion, at Hull on March 28.

Dunstan, highly regarded even when he was still a novice and Frank Bruno's sparring partner, had not been able to progress beyond the British title in the six years he has been campaigning. "My aim is to unite the three titles like Evander Holyfield, then move up to heavyweight," he said.

Johnstone's lead cut

GOLF: Eddie Els is confident that he can still win the Alfred Dunhill PGA Championship, even though he has three strokes behind Tony Johnstone who had light forced the tournament into a fifth day. Els, the US Open champion, and Johnstone still have ten holes to play in the fourth round after the Johnstoneburg event was again disrupted by the weather. After three rounds, Johnstone, who had a 67 for a 17-under-par total of 199, was five strokes ahead, but Els then began cutting into his lead, pulling back two strokes before the light went.

Yates earns reward

CYCLING: Sean Yates reaped the rewards yesterday of a winter programme that did not see him miss a day's training with the fastest February 25-miles time of 5min 43sec to win the Central Sussex time-trial and break course and event records by almost six minutes. Yates, now in his third year of British competition after retiring from a continental racing career, plans another full season of time-trials.

Leeman spurs Durham

BOWLS: John Leeman, who has been relegated to the England reserves for the home international series in Swansea next month, scored a last-of-five at Durham defeated Leicestershire 121-115 to reach the final of the national inter-county championship. Durham, who have won the Liberty Trophy five times, will meet Hampshire, who overwhelmed Hertfordshire 149-101, on April 5.

Sunley has grand time

CRESTA RUN: Great Britain continued to dominate on the Cresta Run this season when James Sunley won the Grand National, the oldest and most famous of Cresta races, at St Moritz on Saturday. Clifton Wrottesley, another Briton and last year's winner, was second and Franco Ganser, an eight-times winner from Switzerland, finished third.

Grobler stands accused

BOXING: Allegations that Jürgen Grobler, the Great Britain coach, was involved with the former East German sport drugs scene have been made by Werner Franke, an authority on sports doping under the former communist regime. Grobler came to Britain in 1991 as coach to Leamster Club and became the national coach in 1993.

Boone the old master

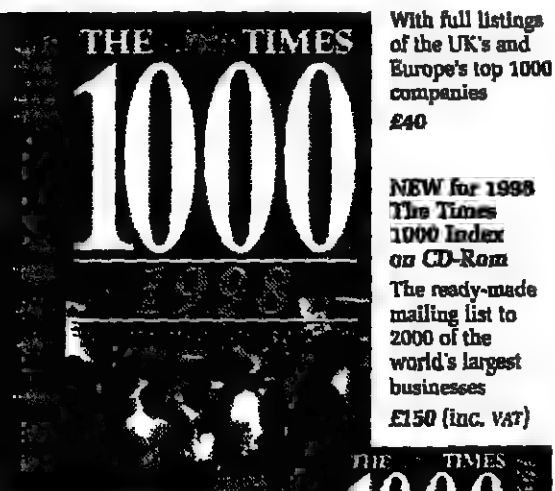
RACQUET: Willie Boone, the defending champion, won the Lacoste British Open at Queen's Club at the weekend against a player 22 years his junior. Boone, at 47 by far the oldest competitor in the tournament, made just eight unforced errors in his 4-0 win over Toby Sawrey-Cookson. This was Boone's fifth Open win, the first coming in 1979.

Minett celebrates

SHOOTING: Louise Minett, from Fareham, Hampshire, yesterday won the British women's air rifle championship at Aldersley, Staffordshire. She led throughout and was seven points ahead after the Olympic final. Minett also challenged the country's leading shooters of both sexes, finishing third in the greater class X championship.

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Why boring bits should not be skated over

Today, let us sing in praise of boring bits. Boring bits are an absolutely essential aspect of sport and, for that matter, of life. Boring bits are the bedrock of family life. No one in his right mind wants to live like a character in a Dostoevsky novel or, to be really far-fetched, an episode of *EastEnders*.

There are plenty of boring bits in sport, as any one who attends live events knows. And they matter more deeply than television can ever know. Boring bits make possible the rare moments of skill, beauty, excitement, drama, gratification, joy and sadness.

And that is what I love about Eurosport when they televise a

leading event like the Winter Olympic Games. They bring you plenty of boring bits. And without boring bits, there is no understanding. Understanding is especially important in winter sports, which are unfamiliar to most of the viewers in Europe.

Compare and contrast Eurosport with Sky. It is like being offered a drink. Eurosport give you a quarter-bottle of Scotch in a tumbler; no water, no ice, nothing. You asked for a drink, that's a drink.

But when Sky gives you a drink, you get an umbrella, several straws, chunks of fruit and you must drink the whole thing out of a coconut. Everything tastes rather too much of lemonade. Of course, the live

sport Sky brings us is great, but I do wish they would learn to leave well alone. A glass of malt whisky does not need a cherry in it.

Eurosport bring you plenty of boring bits. Its exhaustive, exhausting wall-to-wall coverage gives you in superplus the common currency of sport. Which is failure. And before we can understand success, we must understand failure.

This is true in all sports, but it is most obviously true of figure skating. Television is marvellous at figure skating — and also, it totally fails to get to grips with the sport. This contradiction is clear enough if you attend a big skating championships.

Television cannot give you the sense of cold. The biting

chill of the indoor arena takes me straight back to the Silver Blades rink in Streatham and to the great sadness of my life. I never learnt to do that crash halt, when you stop dead at the edge of the rink and cover the girls' ankles with snow.

Television fails to give us two more essential aspects of the sport. "What are conditions like, Simon?" I was once asked by the sports editor on my rinkside telephone when I covered a world champion-



ship. "It's well slippery out there."

This really is tremendously astute observation. An ice rink, especially after the ice cleaning machine has done its stuff, really is

most frightfully skiddy place: not at all like the ploughed and harrowed surface of Silver Blades on a Saturday morning.

Television cannot tell you about the size of the arena, either. Wherever a skater goes, he remains centre-screen. But he is covering an immense

amount of ground and at a quite tremendous speed. Rinkside, you hear the scrapes and scrawps of blade on ice: a sinister, exhilarating sound.

Television viewers, missing these matters, cannot help but see skating as a namby-pamby business, a poor form of art camped up into a poor sort of sport. You need several hours of boring bits to reveal the truth. If you want to understand the champion, any champion, you must watch the entire event. By the losers you shall know them.

Curling has become a minor triumph, because the BBC has shown so much of it — boring bits and all. This was forced on them by the repeated cancellation of the Alpine events. By showing us the boring bits, the

BBC let the story unfold at its own pace. That is why the roaring girls have been a delight.

That decision was forced upon them, but the BBC made a right decision, it seems, on purpose, when they chose to show every one of the last dozen in the men's skating. So we watched failure. Falls. Fear. You skate for show but you jump for dough and the first hour of failure set the scene for the second hour of medals hunting. The initial hour of failures left us in no doubt: it really is well slippery out there.

An artist is normally in control of his art, ballet dancers don't spend half their time falling over, but skating is performed, quite literally, on

the edge of the possible. So, for that matter, is every kind of sport.

Illia Kulik went first of the final group of six. Had the television coverage begun with him, we would have seen a very good skater, but the boring bits told us another and better story. They told us that the performance was sensational: brilliant, beautiful, brave. We knew we were watching a sport, not a parade of posters.

Kulik's perfection undid all those that followed. We watched routines fall apart under the pressures of Kulik's performance. This was a magnificent two hours of sport and the television coverage was more or less perfect. Why? Because of the boring bits.

"This was gung-ho support for the 'culture' of football, alongside one of the most pitiful displays I've seen"

United we stand and fall together

By an unfortunate accident — it surely can't have been on purpose — a large number of Brighton and Hove Albion fans turned up on Saturday to their temporary home in Gillingham wearing plastic yellow firemen's hats.

This was a big occasion for Brighton and the fans were in sunny mood. Not only had they successfully rallied support for a second "Fans United", not only was the sun shining, but the fixture was against Doncaster Rovers, the only club in the league unequivocally worse at football. Life was good, therefore. It even called for balloons and ribbon. When you are placed 91st in the league (with 22 points), it is pleasant to meet the club at 92nd (with 15) — though perhaps not quite so pleasant if, in the event, you can't achieve more than a multiplying goalless draw.

But what was the significance of those helmets, you ask. Well, it was all quite innocently charitable, apparently. Just part of the "Fans United" fun and games. Nothing to do with unsettling poor, nervous Doncaster, who famously came home one day in June 1995 to find the ground at Belle Vue a blackened ruin surrounded by fire engines and the club's main shareholder, Kenneth Richardson, facing a charge of conspiracy to cause arson. You don't say "Nee naw" near Doncaster fans, except with malicious intent. You don't say: "Was that a phalanx of bulldozers I just saw heading for Belle Vue?" And presumably, you don't wear firemen's helmets, except out of pure thoughtlessness.

Saturday was all about solidarity, you see. Brighton lost the Goldstone Ground last season and were nearly starved out of existence; similarly, Doncaster now hear *Light My Fire and Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* played impishly on the sound system wherever

LYNNE TRUSS



they happen to roam and, agonisingly, are powerless to stop the rot at home except to yell "Richardson out" and watch in horror as the standard of football sinks and swirls inexorably down the plug-hole.

In terms of football symbolism, then, it was a strange, complicated day and one wasn't sure whether to laugh or cry. With a crowd of 6,339 turning up (none — as we were often reminded — from Germany), here was excellent gung-ho support for the "culture" of football, alongside one of the most pitiful displays of the sport I've seen. Picture the excellent prospect for Brighton, Doncaster have conceded 80 goals so far this season. Could Brighton make it 81? 82? 83? Well, could they banana, quite frankly. Could they banana.

No wonder the home crowd turned a bit nasty in the second half. Charitable fellow-feeling towards a suffering club is all very well, but if we can't beat Doncaster, we might as well shoot



They came to Priestfield to support Fans United, where the activity on the terraces was more interesting than on the pitch. Photograph: Andrew Hanson

ourselves. Long balls went forward splendidly enough, Peter Smith dashed down the right wing, Stuart Storer was impressive in his first game back. And yet, ultimately, "all gong and no dinner" was the phrase that came to mind and goal-hungry Brighton fans were sent home unrepentant, with not even a bone to chew on.

On the brighter side, however, perhaps Saturday was a turning point for Doncaster, for in goal they had Tony Parks, who played for Tottenham Hotspur many moons ago, apparently. True, their point on Saturday left them still seven adrift at the bottom of the league, but at least they have a goalkeeper worthy of the name and, for the first time in ages, Doncaster's line-up of doesn't

seem entirely to have been composed under the influence of Belling comedy.

Last time Brighton played Doncaster, you see, management of the team had just devolved to Mark Weaver, Doncaster's commercial manager and a friend of Mr Richardson — three authentic managers having left in short succession and in despair. This was last October at Belle Vue and it is an excellent story, unless you happen to come from Doncaster.

Needing a goalkeeper, Weaver looked around for inspiration and lighted on David Smith, a neighbour, recruiting him on the principle that he played for a Sunday team and had won applause for

his ability to kick the ball as far as the halfway line. You can guess what happened next. According to legend, he had to be coaxed, scared out of the dressing-room for the second half. He let in three goals altogether (in the Belling comedy version, incidentally, he is played by Arthur Mullard).

No wonder Doncaster, like Brighton, can only keep one eye on the game these days. On the day that their team got out, limping, with drawing-pins inside their boots, the supporters won't be particularly surprised. The Albion, of course, has a measure of sympathy for Donny's plight: the fans who took home a little piece of hallowed Goldstone turf still water it nightly with tears. Hence the ostensibly selfless attempt to turn

the crucial "six-pointer" on Saturday into a weeping-wall occasion, with international e-mail messages of support for Doncaster (from Venezuela, New Zealand, Arizona) posted up to be read and digested in dignified silence, like the names of the glorious dead.

There is no disguising the fact, though, that both sides desperately needed to win on Saturday, nor that neither team had sufficient gumption to do it. It was High Noon played out with feather dusters and the high sentiment of the surrounding occasion just made the ignominy worse. For Brighton not to take three points from an undernourished side such as Doncaster, especially in a context of hospitality and brotherliness — well, it just wasn't fair.

The trouble the occasion highlighted for me was that, in football, there is only one way of expressing yourself: with support. When a club is doing well, or when it's stayed alive, you support it. What can Chelsea fans do if they disagree with the sacking of Ruud Geul? They can turn out in force in blue shirts. If they agree with the change? Turn up, in identical blue shirts. No wonder the "bad owners" of football clubs get away with it.

To judge by the occasion on Saturday, they could stage the matches in a car park 100 miles away; they could field 11 assorted sheep and giraffes. Still the fans will turn up to celebrate (if nothing else) their defiance of the threat to their "culture".

SPORTS LETTERS

Please include address and telephone number

NFL a poor role model

From Mr Charlie Roberts

Sir, The suggestion that Association football should look to the NFL for an example of a sport with immaculate refereeing standards, few rule changes and a mind above money matters (letters, February 2 and 9), is ridiculous. The Superbowl officials, far from making a single error, missed countless examples of downfield holding (pointed out by Channel 4's excellent commentary team) and even blew up for a deeply pedantic "illegal fair catch signal" in the third quarter, a penalty I have never seen before in 11 years of following the sport.

Unlike Fifa, the NFL changes its rules every year. In the last decade we've seen constant tinkering to speed up the game, boost scoring and protect star players from injury — all financial decisions, all made with the television networks in mind. These rule changes included the abolition of instant replay to determine whether or not a foul had been committed, as the networks felt such deliberation was slowing the game down. If Premiership players are mercenary, how would one

describe the Washington Redskins' Sean Gilbert, a star player who sat out the whole of last season because he felt his multimillion-dollar contract made him insultingly underpaid?

And Premiership chairman pale in comparison with their American counterparts, who regularly uproot their entire team (or "franchise") to move to a new city if they think they can make a few extra bucks elsewhere. Can you imagine Martin Edwards moving Manchester United to Birmingham if the local council refused to buy him a new stadium? This is the equivalent of what Cleveland Browns fans had to put up with two years ago.

American football is a magnificent sport, but it is a sport built for and dictated by television. As a viewer, that's usually a good thing. As a fan, it can result in the complete disappearance of the team you've grown up with. If the NFL does have a lesson for the Premiership, it is a warning of what can happen when a game becomes saturated with money, not a shining example of how to run a modern professional sports league.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLIE ROBERTS,
13 Spring Meadow,
Bracknell,
Berkshire RG12 2JP.

Why do women want to stay separate?

From Mr Jim Park

Sir, Sarah Potter's article on the lack of funding for women snooker players (February 5) makes me ask why it is necessary to have separate women's championships for events which do not require male strength.

I remember Princess Anne beating a lot of men at equestrian events in the early 1970s and Cathy Foster beating men to get into the UK sailing team in the 1984 Olympic Games, both of which required more strength and stamina than some sports or games where there are still separate women's championships such as

snooker, bowls or chess which need only skill and an ability to keep cool under pressure.

I am sure the feminists among your readers would complain if it was said that women were not at least the equals of men in mental strength and finesse, but to seek equal funding and at the same time want to retain separate women's championships in such events somewhat hypocritical. Will women competitors explain?

Yours faithfully,
JIM PARK,
Rivelin, Hillside Road,
Pinner Hill, Middlesex HA5 3YJ.

Skeleton sled

From Mr Philip Mills

Sir, I was interested to read Matthew Bond on February 2, and in particular his reference to "bob-skeleton", which he suggests, "doesn't become a Winter Olympic sport until the 2002 Games in Salt Lake City".

I recall watching at the cinema in Nuneaton in 1948 (no television then) film of Nino Bibbia of Italy winning gold at St Moritz in the event called, I believe "skeleton sled" (the same, head-first technique was used), and John Cranmond winning bronze for Great Britain.

I then looked at earlier Olympic records (St Moritz, 1928) — yes, skeleton sled again, won by Jennison

Heaton (United States), and bronze for David Earl of Northesk (Great Britain). I note both the silver medals went to John R. Heaton (US).

I hope to be watching television in 2002 to see the return of this event, and its ice warriors, to the Olympic programme.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP MILLS,
26 Castlemartin,
Ingleby Barwick,
Stockton on Tees TS17 5BA.

Under the posts

From Mr R. D. Beale

Sir, A well constructed move for rugby, which ends with a wing scoring in result in seven points than will a No 8 picking up and bullocking over under-

neath the posts. In junior rugby, up to the age of 12 or 13, any conversion is a major achievement. Now that the principle of different laws for different age-groups has been accepted in certain areas such as the scrumgame, would it not be a sensible arrangement that all attempted conversions in junior rugby should be taken from in front of the posts?

Yours faithfully,
R. D. BEALE,
Deputy Head,
Pat's Grammar School,
Cheltenham GL51 0HG.

Fencing appeal

From Mr Benjamin James

Sir, I was pleased to see the article (February 9) promoting the sport of fencing. The mention that the majority of the participants were male put me in mind of the observation that in a county competition all a female epeeist has to do to win is to turn up.

I then went to my male-dominated fencing club and found that I was the only male there.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
BENJAMIN J. JAMES,
Clyndley Cottage,
Hankham,
Sussex.
gjudleycottage@compuserve.com

Ear-biting fudge

From Mr Ian Simpson

Sir, The governors of rugby football have found Kevin Yates guilty of biting a lump from an opponent's ear. Their verdict: a ban of six months.

This dreadful fudge brings enormous discredit to the professional game. Mr Yates should have been banned from the professional game for life as an example of conduct that is totally unacceptable in any form of human activity.

Yours sincerely,
IAN SIMPSON,
2 Route de Kerambelle,
Lanildut,
29840 France.
ian.simpson@wanadoo.fr

Palace tactics

From Mr Gavin Ames

Sir, In the light of Crystal Palace's abysmal home form, would they not have been well advised to concede home advantage to their tenants, Wimbledon, last week?

If they had played the fixture at Selhurst Park as the away team, they wouldn't have lost 3-0.

Yours faithfully,
GAVIN AMES,
77 St Chads Road,
Maidenhead,
Berkshire SL6 3BG.
games@sandhurst.berks.sch.uk

This week in THE TIMES



■ Tomorrow
Fire and ice: the stars of the NHL clash at the Winter Olympics with Wayne Gretzky, above, leading Canada against their deadly American ice hockey rivals.

■ Wednesday
Gianluca Viali faces his first selection test in charge of Chelsea — but will he pick himself for the Coca-Cola Cup-tie against Arsenal?

■ Thursday
After defeat against France, what changes will England make to the team to play Wales?

■ Saturday
Football Saturday: the Premiership match-by-match, Oliver Holt, Steve McManaman and Danny Baker.

هكذا من الاحمل

fail Irish

Chaston Vickers learns lesson

Dallaglio doubtful to take on Wales

By MARK SOULISTE

LAWRENCE Dallaglio links up with the England squad today, uncertain whether he will be fit to face Wales in the Five Nations Championship at Twickenham on Saturday. A rib cartilage injury could rule out the England captain for up to four weeks. Dallaglio, 25, pulled out on Friday night of the Wasps team that lost at Bath, because of concerns that the injury he sustained in the opening five minutes against France had not healed. He hopes to take a full part in training this week, but is uncertain how much contact he will be able to take or how much his movement will be restricted.

"I will not play if I am not completely fit," Dallaglio said. "Although I trained with Wasps last week, when I stepped up to contact the injury caused me some discomfort. The cartilage kept popping out."

Dallaglio, who only missed one game last year, has just recovered from deep shoulder bruising that kept him on the sidelines for three weeks. Should Dallaglio not be fit, Clive Woodward, the England coach, has several options in a reshuffled back row, with either Tim Rodber, who was a late withdrawal from the Northampton team at Gloucester on Saturday, or Tony Diprose coming in. The team is expected to be named tomorrow.

Bath are confident that they will win the race to sign Neil Jenkins, who plays at full back for Wales against England. Although Saracens want Jenkins to replace Michael Lynagh, Jenkins would prefer a move to the Bath, which means he could continue to live in Pontypriid. A more likely target for Saracens is Thomas Castaignède.

Allied Dunbar Premiership: Saracens' lead short-lived as Harlequins are beaten

Newcastle resume pole position

Newcastle 43
Harlequins 15

By JOHN HOPKINS

THIS was almost embarrassing for Harlequins. At half-time yesterday, the score was 31-3, thanks to a blitzkrieg of three tries by Newcastle in the last seven minutes. The question at that point was whether Harlequins would be able to maintain any semblance of dignity and keep the score even half-decent. With the wind at their back they did, scoring two tries of their own.

Nonetheless, Harlequins are deep in the mire after a fourth successive defeat in the Allied Dunbar Premiership. The victory by Sale over Richmond yesterday means the London side has now fallen into the bottom four of the first division.

"I am not particularly worried," Andy Keast, the Harlequins director of rugby, said, putting a brave face on it all. "We defended well today and that purple patch killed us off. I thought that in the second half we fought very hard."

Harlequins looked like a team that were not as sharp as they should have been, and no wonder. They had played only one game in the past month and their last league game was the day after Boxing Day. Jim Staples, the full back, was playing his first game in the first team since August. It showed, too, as he misjudged a couple of high kicks and midway through the second half he was replaced, complaining of an injured back.

Newcastle are the most powerful side in the Premiership, their forwards able to out-muscle everyone else. Teams facing them must feel that they do nothing but tackle one big man after another. If it is not Pat Lam or Ross Neadele running at them, then it is Dean Ryan or Paul Vanzandvliet, whose nickname is "Tank". Sometimes, it is Daddie Weir. Among the three-quarters, nobody animates the spectators so much as Vaxiga Tugamala, with those bullocking runs of his. It took three Harlequins to stop him after one such run yesterday.



Lam, who had an outstanding game for Newcastle, closes in on Mensah, of Harlequins, yesterday

Lam had a tremendous game. Every time he had the ball in hand, he made yards of ground. He is playing perhaps the best rugby of his life. Then there is the guile of Rob Andrew at fly half, the solidity of Alan Tait in the centre and the pace of Tony Underwood on the wing. Underwood, back after a long absence because of injury, was electric in scoring his second try, scorching 40 yards down the touchline. Sadly, he injured either a ligament or a hamstring in so doing.

After performances as powerful as this, it is hard to avoid suggesting that Newcastle will go on and win the title. They must be favourites, with one game in hand over Saracens,

but there is a long way to go. It is surprising that, though the season has been going for six months, the Premiership is only at the halfway stage. "We have played 11 games since August 23 and must play the remaining 11 before May 17," Andrew, the Newcastle player-manager, said. "The season is a bit lopsided, isn't it?"

Not as lopsided as this match threatened to be, but to the credit of Harlequins, they regrouped at half-time and, with some slick inter-passing, made the second half more of a contest. Leonard showed up with the ball in his hand several times, as if answering

those who have criticised him, and Wood was as rumbustious as a Newcastle forward. Even so, it was a surprise when, midway through the second half, Toller kicked nearly for the corner and O'Leary chased it and touched down. Two minutes later, Staples was hurtling towards touch, but managed to pass infield to Luger and the flying wing scored a good try.

"It was disappointing not to get to 60 points," Steve Bates, the Newcastle coach, said. "It's very difficult getting these guys psychologically right after an international. We had eight of them coming back and

they are mentally drained." Not half as drained as some Harlequins. After a game like this, when so many big hits were made and received, they probably feel they deserve to be paid more.

SCORERS: Newcastle: Tait (19m), Underwood 2 (25, 45), Ryan (37), Tait (41), Shaw (44). Conversion: Andrew 2. Penalty goals: Andrew (21). Harlequins: Tait (15), Luger (57). Conversion: Luger. Penalty goal: Luger (27).

SCORING SEQUENCE: Newcastle won 7-3, 7-3, 10-3, 17-3, 24-3, 31-3 (half-time), 38-3, 39-3, 46-3, 49-3. NEWCASTLE: S. Luger, J. Naylor, V. Tugamala, A. Tait, T. Underwood (prop), M. Brown, D. Ryan, R. Andrew, G. Armstrong, N. Poppo, W. Luger, G. Graham, 40, P. Neadele, P. Vanzandvliet, G. Archer, G. Weir, P. Lam, R. Arnold (prop), P. Watson, 66, D. Ryan. HARLEQUINS: J. Staples (prop), S. Leonard, 60, J. O'Leary (prop), J. Keast, 60, T. Toller, P. Mensah, D. Luger, R. Lyle, N. Walshe (prop), H. Barnes, 60, J. Leonard, K. Wood (prop), T. Blaupe, 64, A. Yates (prop), M. Cousins, 40, J. Lewis, L. Christie, R. James, W. Davison, A. Leach (prop), L. Coleman, 50.

Referee: C. White (Gloucester)

Bristol's revival comes too late for this season

Bristol 20
Saracens 37

By NICOLAS ANDREWS

TEN games to go and Bristol's future in the Allied Dunbar Premiership first division already looks to be in the hands of the league's administrators. Bristol were always going to be relegation favourites this year and it would not be the first time if a shabby rewriting of the rules mid-season were to keep them from going down.

English First Division Rugby (EFD) meets this week to discuss the possibility — or is that probability? — of expanding the top flight to 14 teams. "It would be a big fiddle for us," Alan Davies, the Bristol director of rugby, said on Saturday. He can say that again.

Leaving aside the rights and wrongs of such shenanigans, one more season of indulgence might be enough to get Bristol back on their feet. The club has gone a fair way towards sorting out its financial problems by selling and leasing back the Memorial Ground and Davies is assembling a young, cosmopolitan and potentially exciting side, in which Josh Lewsey, an England Under-21 full back, stands out.

Robert Jones, the Bristol captain, said that, in the dressing-room after this tenth league defeat of the season, the players concluded that they could compete with the best. Obviously, such a realisation came at least 80 minutes too late, but they did not allow Richard Wallace to score two of his three tries inside the first five minutes, this result might have been less of a formality.

In truth, though, it was all too easy for Saracens to carve open the Bristol defence at will in the first half-hour. If they lost their way somewhat after that, it was of no great concern to Mark Evans, their coach.

Saracens were always in control. Their fast, fluid rugby

in that opening period was just the sort of thing that England failed to deliver in Paris. Forwards and backs stood deep and ran at penetrating angles. They took the ball at pace and unloaded it efficiently in the tackle to keep the momentum going.

"They've got a lovely blend," Davies said. "As an all-round team, they impress me more than Newcastle."

Ah, Newcastle. It is another unfortunate aspect of the league structure that the top two have yet to meet this season — as have the bottom two. And, while on the subject, what kind of fixture computer schedules all three West Country sides at home on one afternoon? There were 3,239 at the Memorial Ground.

"We're not giving any thought to Newcastle at all," Evans said as his side began a 24-hour residency at the top. Are they a better side? "We'll see when we play them."

Evans denies that he has a discipline problem at Saracens, although both Wallace and Darryl Grewcock were lucky to stay on the pitch, receiving only yellow cards for punching. If Saracens are to get the better of Newcastle, though, they will have to keep their cool in the face of greater provocation than that shown by Bristol on Saturday.

EFD may be about to ensure that there is little pressure, little to play for, at the wrong end of the first division, but, up at the sharp end, the fun is just beginning.

SCORERS: Bristol: Tait (19m), Lewsey (75). Conversion: Burke 2. Penalty goals: Burke 2 (7, 21). Saracens: R. Wallace 3 (12, 5, 64), Sella (25), Bracken (28). Conversion: Lynagh 3. Penalty goal: Lynagh 2 (12, 45).

SCORING SEQUENCE: Bristol first 6-7, 6-12, 7-12, 13-15, 15-15, 15-15, 15-22 (half-time), 15-22, 20-22, 15-22.

BRISTOL: J. Lewsey, D. Tait, A. Lofth, H. Morgan (prop), S. Mann, 63m, P. Hall, P. Burke, R. Jones (prop), G. Baker, 71, J. Morgan (prop), A. Collins, 49, F. Lonsdale, H. Johnson, T. Devereux, G. Eagle (prop), A. Adams, 70, D. Corley (prop), S. Preece, 55, C. Smith, E. Potts.

SARACENS: M. Senger, R. Constable, P. Sella, S. Reventon, R. Wallace, M. Lynch, H. Bracken, R. Grew, G. Chuter, P. Wallace, P. Johns, D. Grewcock, F. Penrice, R. Hill, A. Davies.

Referee: C. White (London)

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THE TIMES

Conveyor belt for young talent stretches around the world

Leeds profit from rich Wilkinson inheritance

By Richard Hobson

LAST August, George Graham took solace in defeat against Aston Villa from the performance of an 18-year-old winger named Harry Kewell. "There are at least three more like that from the youth team," the Leeds United manager said. Pushed for names, he grinned broadly before adding cryptically: "Wait, and you'll find out."

Six months on, it is fair to assume that the trio Graham had in mind comprises Alan Maybury, Lee Matthews and Steven McPhail. Each has made his full debut since, while Kewell has towered into perhaps the brightest attacking teenage player in the FA Cup.

These four youngsters helped Leeds to victory against Crystal Palace in the FA Youth Cup final last season and McPhail, a midfielder whose sweet left foot recalls Kevin Sheedy, the former Ireland international, is the cornerstone of the side defending the competition that is sponsored by *The Times*.

McPhail was outstanding a week ago, when Leeds drew 0-0 at Middlesbrough in the fourth round, not least for his unwavering calmness under pressure and ability to create space in tight areas.

Just 48 hours earlier, he made his first appearance as a substitute for the senior team, against Leicester City. The replay against Middlesbrough takes place at Elland Road tomorrow, with the winners due to meet Arsenal in the quarter-finals.

Football history is full of promising young players with



great futures behind them. Of the Leeds side that beat Manchester United in the Youth Cup final of 1993, only Noel Whelan is an established Premiership player and even he felt it necessary to leave Elland Road for Coventry City to further his career. In contrast, Gary Neville, David Beckham, Paul Scholes and Nicky Butt have since enjoyed plenty of success at Old Trafford and are destined for World Cup places in the summer.

At least Graham has shown a willingness to integrate young players into his team, encouraged by Eddie Gray, the former Leeds winger, who was promoted from youth to reserve manager during the summer. It was Gray who encouraged Graham to convert Kewell from a full back



Dungworth, the Leeds youth coach, anxiously watches the 0-0 draw with Middlesbrough in the FA Youth Cup

with attacking instincts. He, along with David O'Leary, Graham's assistant, witnessed the game at the Riverside Stadium last Monday.

There is a feeling that the youth system, with its labyrinthine scouting network, is Howard Wilkinson's most valuable legacy to the club. "The coaches are only as good as the players brought to them," John Dungworth, the youth coach, said.

"The secret is to make sure the system rolls along so a consistent flow of the best lads come to the club. The earlier we can get them, the better, because that means they have a real affinity for the club by the time they get as far as this level."

Old-fashioned catchment areas no longer exist. The whole world is a single market. Kewell, for example, arrived at 16 from a football academy in New South Wales, Australia. Of the present side, McPhail, an Ireland Under-18 international, and John Butler

joined the England Youth squad at Manchester immediately after the game against Middlesbrough. Matthews was there already, while Gareth Evans, Kewell's successor at left back, is involved at national under-16 level.

"At this age boys can be brilliant one week but hopeless the next"

"When one of the boys is called into the first-team squad, it sends a real buzz through the squad. I am sure one reason for the Manchester United lads breaking through is that they pushed each other and saw a way into the first team if they worked hard enough. Self-motivation like that is worth days of coaching."

any certainty who will come through and who will fall back. Having said that, it is clear Steven [McPhail] has great ability. The other lads respond to him, which is a very encouraging sign. He is the sort of player who links up play, who knits things together. It means he might go unnoticed by your average spectator, but not by people who know what they are looking for.

"What it does do is underline the fact that we are right to want to expand. Demand from boys north of the border has resulted in us staging a Scottish tour for the first time this year, in addition to the National, Southern and Northern tours in the rest of the UK."

"We do not intend to stop here. There is tremendous enthusiasm in the JGT and we can only answer that enthusiasm by expanding."

Springate started the JGT five years ago and, for four of those years, ran it at his own expense. The biggest step forward came last year, when Daihatsu, the Japanese car manufacturer, took on the title sponsorship and *The Times* also became associated with the competition, allowing Springate to become a full-time official for the first time.

Under the skin of sport

Sifting talent can produce mixed feelings

By Mel Webb

PEACE COIN Springate in the coming days. Springate, the executive director of the Daihatsu Junior Golf Tour (JGT), is rapidly approaching the time when he and his senior aides have to decide who will win places in this year's competition. The problem that they face may be one for which they might be envied, but will be no less painful for all that. The reason — the tour is fast becoming a victim of its own success.

The tour is to be expanded this year to encompass four separate sub-tours, each of which will be for 72 young players. The headache-inducing element is that by the time the deadline for applications is reached on Friday, Springate and his fellow administrators are likely to have to choose their 288 from more than 1,500 applicants.

"Yes, it's a nice problem to have," Springate said. "It means that we can ensure that the standard remains high, but it's never nice to have to tell youngsters that, for all their enthusiasm, they will not get a place."

"What it does do is underline the fact that we are right to want to expand. Demand from boys north of the border has resulted in us staging a Scottish tour for the first time this year, in addition to the National, Southern and Northern tours in the rest of the UK."

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All last year's winners will be on board again this season and they have been joined for the first time by Adobe, the American computer software giant. Further, big-name sponsors are expected in the next few weeks.

Sponsors aside, one of the biggest flips to the JGT's growth came when David Leadbetter, probably the best-known coach in world golf, agreed to become its patron. That Leadbetter's name and reputation helped the competition to grow is beyond doubt; without him it is doubtful if a link with a powerful junior golf organisation in the United States would have been forged. It was his prompting that last



THE TIMES

year brought together the JGT and the American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) and that synergy between the two organisations is sure to grow. In the late autumn, Leadbetter funded a visit by two of the JGT's leading players to the United States to play in the AJGA's Rolex State Junior Classic in Florida. Gareth Gillatt and Richard McEvoy, winners of the JGT national division and Tournament of Champions respectively, acquitted themselves well at the Walt Disney World Resort and, although they missed the cut by a couple of shots, were still better for the experience.

Going from winter golf in Great Britain to the heat and humidity of Florida asked a lot of Gillatt and McEvoy. Thickly fringed greens and the experience of the ball flying a couple of clubs more than they expected proved, in the end, just a little too much.

Gillatt and McEvoy went on to receive coaching from Leadbetter at Lake Nona and Springate, who accompanied them, was able to return home with the promise that the JGT would receive invitations for its best players from the AJGA in future years.

Back home, Springate is preparing to stage a four-tournament girls' tour this year, as well as the four divisions of the boys' event, and entries will be taken until May 15 from girls — who must have a handicap of 20 or under and be under 18 on January 1 — for the 42 places available. Boys must be under 18 on January 1 and have a handicap of 10 or better.

Applications for entry details for the English divisions of the tour from the Daihatsu Junior Golf Tour, PO Box 3227, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 8EQ; for the Scottish Tour from PO Box 14668, Glenrothes, Fife KY6 3YE. An A4 stamped addressed envelope should be included.

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CHANGING TIMES



Lynne Truss, of *The Times*, makes the quarter-final draw with Graham Kelly, chief executive of the FA

Clifton joins the real tennis set

John Goodbody traces the history of a game of guile with strong royal links

THE history of real tennis is a fascinating one. Like many cricket-loving boys, I was introduced to the game at Lord's, where, when rain interrupted play, I used to go across to the court behind the pavilion to watch matches in progress. They were rare opportunities to get to know the sport, for, even 40 years or so later, there are still only 23 courts in Great Britain, the latest of which was opened by Prince Edward at Clifton College, Bristol, on Saturday.

The Prince represented Cambridge University at the sport, becoming the latest in a long line of royal participants. Real tennis began in France in the 11th century, probably first in the cloisters of monasteries and then castle courtyards. Originally played with the hand, it is still called *le jeu de paume* in France and, for many years, a collection of French Impressionist paintings was housed in a former court in a corner of the Tuileries Gardens in Paris.

The sport was immensely popular with royalty, sometimes with fatal results. Louis X, of France, died of a chill after one energetic contest, a fact that also befell Henry I, of Castile, and Philip I, Charles VIII, of France, was so keen to watch one game that he ran through a doorway, striking his head on the lintel, and subsequently died. James I, of Scotland, might have avoided assassination in 1437 had he been able to escape down a drain, but it had been blocked to prevent the loss of tennis balls.

The game is mentioned in six of Shakespeare's plays.

while both Charles I and Charles II, of England, were known to enjoy a game. Exile in France for James II was made more bearable by his proximity to a court.

A world championship, perhaps the first in any sport, was begun in about 1740, but, by 1797, *The Times* was reporting "the once fashionable game of tennis is in decline". Over the past 200 years, dozens of other activities have overhauled it in popularity.

Where better to start a revival than in the schools?



Prince Edward, happy to be back at Clifton, at the new facility after the opening ceremony at Clifton

Canford and Oratory are two that already play and now pupils of Clifton have been attracted to the game.

Their £585,000 court, the first in the West of England, has been developed by Bristol and Bath Tennis Club through fund-raising and £350,000 of lottery money from the English Sports Council. Scholarships will be available for both boys and girls.

John Talbot, the master in charge of both tennis and real tennis at Clifton, said: "It's advantage as a sport is that it

is esoteric. People are intrigued by the mystery that surrounds it."

"In many ways, it is technically more difficult than tennis. You cannot go through a couple of points without thinking or otherwise you'll be down two or three games."

"The service is less important than in tennis and is really only a way of just putting the ball into play. I regularly play with people 30-40 years older than me. You need guile and cunning."

Anticipation of where the ball will land is vital. As the French say: *le balle cherche le bon joueur* (the ball looks for the good player).

Talbot is not concerned that the "technique" of his tennis players will be affected. "They are quite different strokes. In tennis, there is more top spin, more emphasis on serve and volley, whereas in real tennis there is a lot of cutting and slicing of the ball. In fact, tennis players find it improves their footwork."

As Charlie Toogood, 44, said: "You have got to think it is not a game of power. Already, more than 20 pupils at Clifton have started playing. One of them, Owen Morgan, 17, said: "It is very different from any other game I have ever played."

Talbot is looking for pupils with "a good eye for a ball" and tennis and squash players and also cricketers. He hopes to have "faster sessions" to help kindle interest. "We can now provide every pupil with an opportunity to play the game," he said. They will find much reward them.

Ronald Gribble goes to the Italian Alps to learn *langlauf* and masters the art of walking like a penguin



Ramblers get the chance to ski in the Prato Piazza at 2,000 metres near the old Austro-Hungarian border: this soup-bowl-shaped meadow, set between half a dozen peaks, resembles a white moonscape, criss-crossed by a spaghetti junction of pistes

The full monty — on skis

WE followed the antics of our ski instructor and pranced along in the snow like John Cleese in *Monty Python's Ministry of Silly Walks* sketch, swinging the arms like recruits for the P Royal Marines.

Then a line of blind skiers, led by a sighted instructor, came down the piste in formation. "If they can do it, so can you," said Nigel Shervey, our instructor, who had accepted the challenge to teach our 13-

Having mastered the slide and the long strides of the silly walk, Nigel came up with another gem: "Now you must learn to walk like a penguin." By making herringbone patterns in the snow with our skis, we discovered we could climb slopes, and by turning the ankles inwards so that the edges of the skis bit into the snow, we could stop ourselves slipping backwards.

Although safer than downhill skiing, *langlauf* can be more tiring because you do not use ski lifts and need sufficient stamina to get to the top in order to ski down. But the freedom to be able to zigzag through snow-covered forests and valleys and enjoy mile after mile of dramatic scenery is worth the effort. On downhill slopes there is the thrill of the wind in your hair as you whizz along the tracks and around bends, brushing fir trees, like a bobsleigh rider.

One morning, in temperatures of -15C, we watched the real professionals of the sport as 1,500 skiers lined up for the start of the annual 42-kilometre Dolomites race. In a blaze of ski suits, their breath freezing in the icy wind, they charged off like troops on a medieval battlefield.

The Arctic conditions later changed to brilliant sunshine and after skiing for a few hours I found myself stripping off on the slopes after becoming overheated in my ski suit.

Among our party were two retired police officers, one a former Scotland Yard marksman and an explosives expert who had decided to learn to ski at the age of 61 after successfully completing three London Marathons. We also had a former BBC radio producer, a swimming teacher, a physiotherapist, a lawyer, a German woman who had last skied as a child in Bavaria, and two French women.

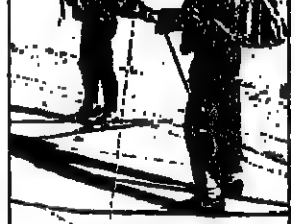
Cross-country skiing exercises every muscle. After a couple of days we began to hurt from top to toe, but had a heated pool back at the hotel. Union to ease our aches and an excellent five-course dinner to look forward to.



Ski instructor Nigel Shervey follows the 30-kilometre route of the old railway from Cortina d'Ampezzo to Dobbiaco

Skiers can go on to learn freestyle skating. The skier moves from the tramlines to the centre of the piste and raises each leg, in a frog-like stretch, pushing down on the other ski to produce an elegant gliding motion. At the same time skaters use the poles in a stabbing movement to propel themselves forward.

On Tuesday afternoon, as we skied across frozen lakes and followed the route of the old railway track from Cortina d'Ampezzo to Dobbiaco, a low-level military jet screamed overhead. Later we heard the



A break to admire the view

news that a cable car had crashed at Cavalese when the cables were severed by a US Prowler from the Aviano air base near us.

On the fourth day I sprained an ankle and hobbled back to base. But I reduced the swelling by putting my foot under an icy tap that night and again before breakfast and was back on the slopes without a break.

Other minor injuries at the end of the week amounted to a black-and-blue arm, two sprained thumbs and a bruised coccyx. Not bad considering we were all new to the sport and managed to progress from the nursery slopes to more daring things.

But the stars of the week were the group of blind Italian skiers staying at our hotel. They followed instructions without fear and their accomplishments and sense of humour on the slopes was an inspiration to us all.

The author travelled with Ramblers Holidays, Box 43, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL9 6PQ (01707 331133). A week's cross-country skiing in Dobbiaco from February to March costs from £320 to £360 including flights, half-board, ski hire, boots and instruction.



SPORT FOR ALL

strong party to cross-country ski in a week.

I had joined a Ramblers beginners' course at Dobbiaco in the Dolomites, one of the best areas for cross-country skiing in Europe with more than 120 miles of prepared ski trails. We were learning *langlauf*, the 1,000-year-old Nordic method of travelling between villages cut off by snow.

After being fitted with ski shoes, which look like lightweight continental football boots, we were given a pair of narrow racing skis. Nigel then took us to a white valley and showed us the tramlines, cut in the snow by a tractor, which skiers skate along.

A small metal bar in the toe of each boot locks into the centre of the skis and acts as a hinge so that the skier can raise the heel, as in walking. Cross-country skiing is a blend of walking and skating. With the body held upright, the knees slightly bent and using balance to transfer weight from one ski to the other, learners can slide along in the snow at about 5mph.

A military two-step on ice

THE skiers stood in the lee of a wall built of ice blocks. Their white clothing helped them to blend in with the snow high up in the mountains of northeast Turkey between Erzurum and the Iranian border.

These were ski-troops taking part in a Nato exercise in the mid-1980s. As I watched, they moved on with loping strides, legs and arms, skis and sticks used in a synopated rhythm. Ever since, I have wanted to try their type of skiing.

Now, at the age of 54 and never having set foot on a ski before, I have been trying to emulate them, going to *langlauf* school in Austria, where I could appreciate the beauty of the sun glinting on razor-backed peaks.

Having seen these ski-troops moving with confidence and control, I thought cross-country skiing would be a cinch. Then, a few months ago, my wife Adele announced: "I have always fancied skiing. Not that downhill stuff with hordes of people, but rather like those soldiers you saw in Turkey. But if we don't do it soon, we'll be too old..."

Within no time, the Ingthams' winter

sports brochure had arrived and we were booked into the Hotel Salzburgerhof, Zell am See, Austria — which proved a place of friendly comfort, superb food and warming liquids. Because of all this, my wish to emulate a ski-soldier promptly evaporated. However, my wife was still taking the project seriously. So, on day two, Brigitte Nicka, who owns a local *langlauf* school, collected us from the hotel for instruction in the art.

Courses are usually eight hours spread over four days. Brigitte demonstrated the technique, moving with balletic precision. She was poised and precise, we fell over — several times. But then Brigitte had been doing this sort of thing since she was six; we had been doing it since a quarter to eleven.

So we tried again and again and, as the advice to all novice skiers echoed across the snow — "Bend the knees!" — the message started to sink in and our confidence grew. Then came the sticks, which returned us to utter confusion.

Brigitte patiently explained and demonstrated again how it was done. "It is very important that you get the tech-

nique right. Take time — and practise!" Stopping — "snowploughing" in ski vernacular — is yet another technique to acquire. Like much of the learning process it generates expletives. The charming Brigitte had heard them all before, many times. In many languages.

Says Brigitte: "I may take a dozen experienced people and usually ski for a couple of hours, stop for refreshment and then do another hour. *Langlauf* provides excellent exercise. It is an enjoyable way of exploring. I sometimes take people in their seventies. Tracks are clearly marked and it is becoming more popular. Some people combine *langlauf* and downhill during their holiday."

Adele and I enjoyed our introduction to skiing and will try it again. But if I am really honest I don't think I would make a ski soldier, after all. Age was not the problem I thought it might have been — but I am too old to enlist.

STUART BIRCH

Prices at Brigitte Nicka's *Langlauf* school: five people minimum; four half days, total eight hours, inc. equipment: 1050 Austrian schillings (about £68) each.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Holding up aces is always taken as a sign of good play, even if there is no immediate benefit; both in defence or as declarer the added flexibility may help later in the hand. This is a good example, from the third round of the 1997 Premier League.

Dealer South	Game all	IMP's
♠ 10 6 5 ♥ 10 6 7 6 2 ♦ K 8 5 ♣ 5 2	♠ 8 7 5 4 ♥ K Q ♦ 8 7 6 ♣ J 8 5 4	♠ K 9 2 ♥ A 8 5 ♦ A Q 5 3 ♣ Q 8 3
♠ A Q J ♥ J 4 3 ♦ J 10 4 ♣ A K 10 7	♠ W ♥ E ♦ S ♣ N	

Contract: One No-Trump by South. Leads: eight of hearts

South opened One Club and rebid One No-Trump over North's One Spade response. Clearly West should lead a heart, but the choice of spot card is moot. Some players treat the ten as a low card, and so lead second highest. I have a slight preference for fourth best, but the second best worked well here. East (Gunnar Hallberg) could tell that his partner Colin Simpson did not have the jack — East held the nine and West would scarcely lead the eight from a suit headed by J 10 8.

So Hallberg ducked the first trick. Now declarer continued by taking a spade finesse. Better is to lead the jack of clubs from dummy, and play the ten from hand — if that loses to the queen, declarer still has time to re-enter dummy with a club to take the spade finesse later.

After the queen of spades had held declarer continued with ace, king and another

club. Hallberg won and switched to a low diamond, and the defence took four tricks in the suit. On the last diamond declarer was squeezed — if he let go the jack of spades, the defence would play a spade and thus set up a spade trick to cash when they got in with the ace of hearts. A heart discard allows the defence to cash the suit. And a club discard enables the defence to endplay declarer by playing ace and another heart.

If declarer had realised the perils of even one discard, he would have done better to play ace and ten of clubs; then he could discard the king of clubs on the fourth round of diamonds. Now if East exits with a club, declarer is discarded after him and can still survive.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

By Philip Howard

MAXWELL'S DEMON
a. An imaginary being
b. A game of Patience
c. A Nott's bowler's yorker

MAJOLI
a. Feline
b. Bookbinding
c. South Pacific Islands

ESCAPEMENT
a. Action Colditz
b. Part of a clock
c. Holidays
MAGNETO
a. Non-ferrous metal
b. A boys' magazine
c. A generator

Answers on page 43

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Linares

The tournament set for Linares, Spain, which runs from February 22 to March 9, can claim to be one of the strongest in the history of the game. The field consists of seven top players who will contest a double-round competition. They are: Garry Kasparov (Russia), Vladimir Kramnik (Russia), Viswanathan Anand (India), Vassily Ivanchuk (Ukraine), Veselin Topalov (Bulgaria), Alexei Shirov (Spain) and Peter Swidler (Russia). This week I shall be previewing the tournament. Today's game sees Kasparov, the winner last year, outplaying Alexei Shirov, the Latvian grandmaster.

White: Alexei Shirov
Black: Garry Kasparov
Linares 1997

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠	♠
♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣
♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥	♥

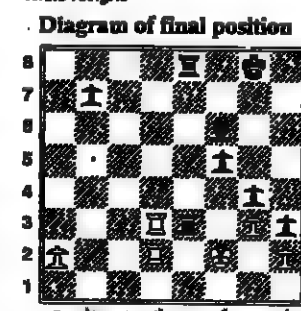


Diagram of final position

London clubs
The Mind Sports Olympiad Trophy competition has now replaced the Martell Cognac Competition. The draw for this competition took place on February 10 at the RAC Club in Pall Mall.

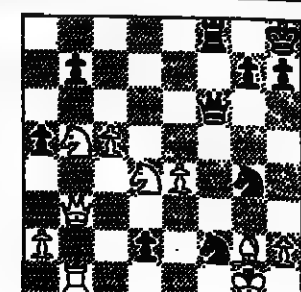
FIRST-ROUND DRAW: Home House v Oxford and Cambridge B, Hurlingham A v B, RAC B v Rotherham A, BSC v Twickenham, Ashmole v Rotherham B, Oxford and Cambridge A v Hurlingham B, Chelsea Arts v RAC A.

First-round matches should be played before April 2. The best losing team will be invited to play in the second round. For further details please contact Barry Martin, tel/fax 0181-742 2311, The South Lodge, Chiswick House Grounds, Chiswick W4 2RP.

Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Fernandez — Rodriguez, Spain 1997. Black has many powerful trumps in this position: his active knights, pressure on the f-file and the passed pawn on d2. How did he combine all these to force a quick win?



Solution on page 43

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and interest rates are based on middle prices.

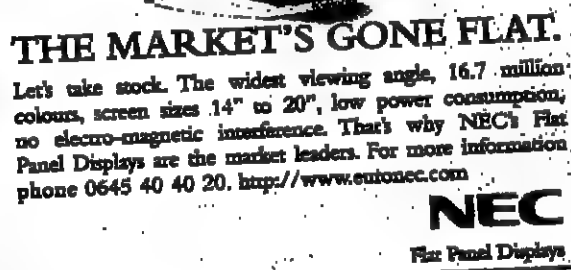
[illegible][illegible]

	105W	+ 1W	0.5W	0.25	UNDATED	20W
	102W	+ 1W				40W
	102W	+ 1W				60W
					1,500	Wm Ltr 74W
					475	Team 74W
					280	Domestic 4W
103W	+ 1W	6.70	6.17	2,550	Team 7, 74W-2001	187W
104W	+ 1W	6.57	6.22	2,480	Team 7, 74W-2001	194W
105W	+ 1W	7.28	6.81	1,100	Team 7, 74W-2001	225W
106W	+ 1W	8.59	6.95	3,740	Team 7, 74W-2001	239W
107W	+ 1W	10.09	6.46	2,820	Team 7, 74W-2000	188W
108W	+ 1W	3.81	4.87	3,960	Team 7, 74W-2001	197W
109W	+ 1W	8.02	6.02	3,740	Team 7, 74W-2001	197W
110W	+ 1W	6.49	6.02	1,100	Team 7, 74W-2001	197W
111W	+ 1W	7.36	6.60	3,740	Team 7, 74W-2001	197W
112W	+ 1W	7.14	6.08	3,740	Team 7, 74W-2001	197W
113W	+ 1W	9.99	6.15	3,740	Team 7, 74W-2001	197W
114W	+ 1W	8.61	6.01	3,740	Team 7, 74W-2001	197W
115W	+ 1W	9.10	6.01	3,740	Team 7, 74W-2001	197W
116W	+ 1W	7.49	6.25	3,740	Team 7, 74W-2001	197W
117W	+ 1W	9.94	6.21	3,740	Team 7, 74W-2001	197W
118W	+ 1W	7.22	6.01	1,300	Team 7, 74W-2001	140W

		RETAILERS - 1960		ALTERNATE	
+%	1.02				20.70 Alaska Paraffin
+%	1.25	178.30	194	21	18.0
+%	6.25	116.30	184	22	14.1
		(1960)			1.25 Cash Carry
		116.30	184	23	14.1
		116.30	184	24	14.1
		116.30	184	25	14.1
		116.30	184	26	14.1
		116.30	184	27	14.1
		116.30	184	28	14.1
		116.30	184	29	14.1
		116.30	184	30	14.1
		116.30	184	31	14.1
		116.30	184	32	14.1
		116.30	184	33	14.1
		116.30	184	34	14.1
		116.30	184	35	14.1
		116.30	184	36	14.1
		116.30	184	37	14.1
		116.30	184	38	14.1
		116.30	184	39	14.1
		116.30	184	40	14.1
		116.30	184	41	14.1
		116.30	184	42	14.1
		116.30	184	43	14.1
		116.30	184	44	14.1
		116.30	184	45	14.1
		116.30	184	46	14.1
		116.30	184	47	14.1
		116.30	184	48	14.1
		116.30	184	49	14.1
		116.30	184	50	14.1
		116.30	184	51	14.1
		116.30	184	52	14.1
		116.30	184	53	14.1
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		116.30	184	62	14.1
		116.30	184	63	14.1
		116.30	184	64	14.1
		116.30	184	65	14.1
		116.30	184	66	14.1
		116.30	184	67	14.1
		116.30	184	68	14.1
		116.30	184	69	14.1
		116.30	184	70	14.1
		116.30	184	71	14.1
		116.30	184	72	14.1
		116.30	184	73	14.1
		116.30	184	74	14.1
		116.30	184	75	14.1
		116.30	184	76	14.1
		116.30	184	77	14.1
		116.30	184	78	14.1
		116.30	184	79	14.1
		116.30	184	80	14.1
		116.30	184	81	14.1
		116.30	184	82	14.1
		116.30	184	83	14.1
		116.30	184	84	14.1
		116.30	184	85	14.1
		116.30	184	86	14.1
		116.30	184	87	14.1
		116.30	184	88	14.1
		116.30	184	89	14.1
		116.30	184	90	14.1

217	+ 16%	0.8	29.0
180	-	1.9	54.0
100	+ "	3.3	16.2
78	+ "		
60	-		
39	+ 3%	0.4	26.5
545	-	1.8	
546	+ 6%	0.2	
742	+ 1	3.4	19.7
970	-	2.9	14.3
19	+ 2%		

Legend: + Increase; - Decrease; " No change; Figures in small date Columns in bold are 1973 data.



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NEC
Flat Panel Displays

Year	Un %	50%
1970	2.4%	40%
1975	4%	50%

LINKED are projected inflation rates

Year	Un %	100%
1970	2.4%	150%
1975	4%	175%
1980	7%	200%
1985	10%	180%
1990	13%	160%
1995	16%	140%
2000	19%	120%
2005	22%	100%
2010	25%	80%
2015	28%	60%
2020	31%	40%

		RETAILERS - 1960		ALTERNATE	
+%	1.02				20.70 Alaska Paraffin
+%	1.25	178.30	194	21	18.0
+%	6.25	116.30	184	22	14.1
		(1960)			1.25 Cash Carry
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		116.30	184	48	14.1
		116.30	184	49	14.1
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		116.30	184	70	14.1
		116.30	184	71	14.1
		116.30	184	72	14.1
		116.30	184	73	14.1
		116.30	184	74	14.1
		116.30	184	75	14.1
		116.30	184	76	14.1
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		116.30	184	82	14.1
		116.30	184	83	14.1
		116.30	184	84	14.1
		116.30	184	85	14.1
		116.30	184	86	14.1
		116.30	184	87	14.1
		116.30	184	88	14.1
		116.30	184	89	14.1
		116.30	184	90	14.1

[illegible]

Chef to get taste of directorship after float

By Dominic Walsh

TONY TOBIN, the television chef, looks set to become a director of a public company if plans by Elite Restaurants to float on the Alternative Investment Market in a year's time come to fruition.

Elite, based in Surrey, has grown to seven restaurants in just three years, but the group is to seek an AIM listing in order to speed up expansion. The focus will be on Torrellini, a pasta-based concept, which accounts for five of the group's restaurants.

Paul Montalto, the company's Italian-born founder and chairman, said: "We could carry on as we are, growing organically, but an AIM float would give us the means to really speed up the process, and expand beyond our current area of Surrey, Sussex and Kent."

He said he wanted to have around a dozen restaurants by the time Elite joins the AIM. Two more Torrellinis will

open in Epsom and Sevenoaks in the next two months.

Mr Montalto said that the average cost of opening a Torrellini, which competes in the same market as Pizzeria Express and ASK Pizza, was around £150,000, an investment that he reckons to recoup over 12 to 18 months.

Elite is forecast to make a profit of around £750,000 this year, on turnover of £3.5 million.

Mr Tobin, who has become a celebrity through his appearances on *Ready Steady Cook*, is group executive chef (not to be confused with chief executive), but spends most of his time in the kitchen of The Dining Room, a more upmarket restaurant in Reigate, Surrey, which also forms part of the group.

Mr Montalto said that he intended to make the chef a director after the floatation, and would be giving him share options.



Tony Tobin is executive chef as opposed to chief executive

Fuji claims its cameras are copied

By Our City Staff

FUJI Photo Film is claiming that rival companies are illegally making copies of its single-use cameras.

The company has filed a complaint with the International Trade Commission, a US government agency, accusing 28 companies of infringing its patents on the popular cameras, which Fuji says it developed and introduced in Japan and the US under the trademark Fujicolor QuickSnap.

It alleges the companies operate mainly overseas and import the cameras, sales of which have been growing more quickly than those of traditional cameras. Among the companies named were Konica, Opticam, Penmax and Vivitar.

Eastman Kodak, Fuji's arch rival in the film business, said it would support the Japanese-owned company's complaint.

After Fuji introduced the cameras about ten years ago, Kodak launched a competing product. The companies now cross-license patents.

In its complaint, Fuji said the companies make single-use cameras or re-use shells made by Fuji and others and then sell the cameras in America.

High-risk customers face bigger charges in banking revolution

By Richard Miles
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

BANKS may soon start charging customers according to their individual risk profiles, forcing people with poor credit records to pay more for loans and other services.

Customers who visit bank branches infrequently may also pay less for the services.

But consumer groups fear such revolutionary changes could penalise the poor and the disadvantaged. They would effectively be denied access to credit at reasonable rates and, in some cases, to the entire banking system.

Peter Ellwood, chief executive of Lloyds TSB, the UK's largest high street bank, says he is exploring ways of linking charges and costs to a customer's risk profile and profitability.

However, Mr Ellwood emphasises that such practices, which he believes to be more equitable than current price structures, are unlikely to be adopted for several years because "no one wants to be the first to break ranks on the issue of differential pricing."

"Why should I charge someone with a good credit record an APR of 15 per cent, yet offer



Peter Ellwood: equitable

the same rate to someone with a poor risk profile?

"We have to look at linking customers to their profitability and risk," he says.

The issue of tailoring price to frequency a customer uses a branch is far thornier. Abbey National upset its customers in September when it said it would charge those with an Instant Plus account £1 for every withdrawal, deposit or statement request made at the counter.

At the time, Abbey National said Instant Plus was designed as a card-based account, implying that holders

would continue to receive free banking as long as they used only the automatic teller machines (ATMs).

Transactions conducted over the counter at a branch can cost banks four or five times as much to process.

Another idea currently under discussion by banks is an "Internet and ATM only" account. In return for agreeing not to use the branches, the customer would pay lower fees.

NatWest is one bank considering this option, but it has emphasised that its thinking is still very much in its infancy.

To some extent, differential pricing already exists at the top end of the market, as banks increasingly promote fee-based accounts that are linked to additional services.

However, the majority of customers continue to enjoy free banking. Consumer groups fear that the advent of differential pricing will lead to further branch closures, affecting rural communities and people living in rundown city centres.

The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux last year accused the banks of turning their backs on the low-paid and disadvantaged.

Insurers talk of mergers in wake of heavy weather and currency costs

By Marianne Curphey
INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

COMPOSITE insurers outperformed the FTSE All-share index by almost 20 per cent last year but their profits have peaked and will start to fall in 1998, according to analysts.

Heavy weather losses, the impact of currency movements and falling investment income are likely to take their toll on the full-year profit figures for 1998-99.

The composites are due to report over the next month and Commercial Union and Guardian Royal Exchange kick off the sector by unveiling 1996-97 figures on February 25 followed by Royal & SunAlliance on March 5 and General Accident on March 12.

Despite the gloomy predictions, the shares may continue to rise over the short term because the market believes that difficult trading conditions will force

insurers to become merger or takeover candidates.

Salomon Smith Barney is bullish on share prices and has increased target prices for shares for CU (currently £10.13, target £10.50), Royal & SunAlliance (currently 683p, target 800p) and GRE (currently 398p, target 425p). GA, which closed at £12.87 last week has already broken through the broker's £12.75 target.

Salomon's Andrew Pitt has reduced 1997 and 1998 forecasts but expects profits to bounce back in 1999 and says the UK composites still look good value when compared to their European peer group.

Meanwhile, Merrill Lynch forecasts that the downturn in UK underwriting will not be severe but will be prolonged. Steven Bird, insurance analyst, calculates that by 1999 underwriting losses will be equivalent to 7 per cent of premium income and this will increase to 8 per cent in 2000. This compares with 2 per cent in

1996 and 6 per cent to the end of December 1997. He said: "The fundamentals do not look too attractive, but perversely the City may sense that tougher conditions will lead to consolidation. In addition, composites invest heavily in equities and bonds and while their profits are coming under pressure their net assets continue to grow as the market rises."

He has pencilled in a £419 million operating profit for CU (1996: £444 million) and a figure of £188 million for GRE (1996: £281 million). Analysts believe GRE's recent purchase of PPP healthcare will enhance earnings in the long term. For RSA he has downgraded his forecast to £869 million (1996: £887 million) after RSA's comments about its exposure to storm damage at Christmas.

Finally GA is expected to unveil operating profit for 1997 of £503 million, up from £421 million in 1996.

THE TIMES 1000 MARKET									
1997	Low	High	1998	Low	High	1997	Low	High	1998
130	100	120	130	100	120	130	100	120	130
131	101	121	131	101	121	131	101	121	131
132	102	122	132	102	122	132	102	122	132
133	103	123	133	103	123	133	103	123	133
134	104	124	134	104	124	134	104	124	134
135	105	125	135	105	125	135	105	125	135
136	106	126	136	106	126	136	106	126	136
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138	108	128	138	108	128	138	108	128	138
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140	110	130	140	110	130	140	110	130	140
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195	165	185	195	165	185	195	165	185	195
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198	168	188	198	168	188	198	168	188	198
199	169	189	199	169	189	199	169	189	199
200	170	190	200	170	190	200	170	190	200

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RESULTS AND STATISTICS

TODAY

Interims: IAF, Workspace (q3).
Finals: Cliveden, Envirochem, Euro-
tunnel, Flying Flowers, Norsk Hydro,
Royalblue, Economic statistics: EU
finance ministers' meeting.

TOMORROW

Interims: Compel, Freeport Leisure,
John Hedges, Macro 4, Finals: Anglo
& Overseas Trust, Barclays, Clondal-
kin, Dobbies Garden Centres, Irish
Permanent, Low & Bonar, Polyhedron
Holdings, Quarto, Sedgwick,
SmithKline Beecham (q4), Stadium
Group, Temple Bar Inv Trust, Trust of
Property Shares, Economic statis-
tics: UK, Jan PSBR, Buba seeks re-
ports: weekly US chainstore sales sur-
veys: US treasury auction of short-
term bills: API weekly oil supply
statistics.

WEDNESDAY

Interims: Airtrics (q1), Finals: Allied
Irish Banks, Mersey Docks, St Mod-
wen Prop, T&L, Woolwich Economic
statistics: Buba awards report: US
Jan PPI and housing starts:
US Treasury 2-yr, 5-yr notes.

THURSDAY

Interims: Bellwinch, Brown & Jack-
son, Tor Investment, Finals: BAE,
Glaxo Wellcome, Provident Financial,
Skillgroup, Economic statistics:
UK Jan prov M4 and final M3, UK BSA
Jan lending: UK BSA end-Jan bank
lending: BOE MPC evidence on in-
flation report to Treasury Select Com-
mittee: US Nov trade deficit: US weekly job-
less claims report.

FRIDAY

Interims: none scheduled, Finals:
Rank, Economic statistics: none
scheduled.

SUNDAY TIPS

The Sunday Times: Bay Azlan,
Photobion, Flying Flowers,
Chesterfield Properties, The
Sunday Telegraph: Bay Power-
Gen, Ladbroke, Inn Business,
The Mail on Sunday: Bay Lynx
Holdings, The Express on Sun-
day: Bay Wilmington, Riva,
Sell Pentex Energy, The Ob-
server: Bay GKN, Siebe, Weir
Group, Sunday Business: Bay
Kopernikus, Sakura Japan,
GAM Diversity and All-
Weather Excel hedge funds.

GLAXO WELLCOME: These could be the last set of full-year results reported by Britain's biggest drugs company before the proposed £100 billion merger with rival SmithKline Beecham, forming the second biggest company in the world.

Both companies have already made clear that the post results meeting will focus purely on the figures. They have no wish to talk further about the plan to merge.

However, these figures from Glaxo on Thursday will also perhaps highlight why Sir Richard Sykes, the chairman, is so eager to merge. According to Nigel Barnes at Merrill Lynch, the broker, they will show a downturn in pre-tax profits from £2.96 billion to £2.72 billion while earnings will drop from 56.7p a share to 52.6p.

Currency movements, especially those in Europe, are certain to depress the final outcome. But the real drag on profits will come from the expiry of patents in Zovirax, last April, and more importantly Zantac, its ulcer treatment which came off patent in July.

Sales of Zantac are expected to have dropped 30 per cent to £1.36 billion. At its peak, sales of the drug topped more than £2 billion a year. The dividend is expected to be 35p against 34p last time.

SMITHKLINE BEECHAM: Full-year figures tomorrow should produce a useful improvement backed up by its impressive portfolio of drugs. The two best performers from Jan Leschly, the chief executive, stable will again come from Paxil/Seroxat, the anti-depressant, and Augmentin.

Nigel Barnes is looking for pre-tax profits of £1.65 billion compared with £1.54 billion last time. Earnings will show a modest improvement of 1p to 20p stifled by an ongoing outflow to minority interests. Paxil/Seroxat continues to grab

market share in both Europe and the US. Sales are expected to be about £990 million, or 19 per cent of group sales. Augmentin will also generate £950 million of sales but there are signs of a slowdown in the growth rate.

BARCLAYS BANK: The recent announcement of a higher-than-expected trading loss at BZW equities, the investment banking operation sold last year to Credit Suisse First Boston for a mere £100 million, has sent analysts scurrying for their calculators. Many have cut their operating pre-tax profit forecasts to unchanged at £2.3 billion. But some like NatWest Markets have slashed their forecast to £1.84 billion with earnings a share down from 104.2 to 80.5p. Either way, substantial recurring charges are expected to render the final number meaningless.

The City will also be looking for a further swathe of share buy-backs following a £700 million repurchase programme in 1997, in the absence of a major acquisition. Martin Taylor, chief executive, could return up to £800 million to investors this year. However, the toppy share price — just under £20 — could prove a dampener.

WOOLWICH: With its shares at about 380p, the mortgage bank looks a little over-valued, and many professional bank watchers have urged investors to sell. A wave of post-conversion redemptions is likely to take the shine off its pre-tax profits, which are expected to remain flat at about £400 million when reported on Wednesday. However, the prospect of Woolwich returning some of its surplus capital to shareholders might persuade many investors, particularly former members, to hold on to their stock.

The bank has said it will present proposals for capital repatriation at its AGM on April 22. A takeover



Jan Leschly, of SB, and Sir Richard Sykes, of Glaxo, will want an easy delivery for their baby

remains a possibility, but any bid would have to be agreed as Woolwich has five years' protection from hostile predators. The payout is set to grow by 14 per cent from 7.9p to 9p.

BRITISH AEROSPACE: A sharp drop in losses at its commercial aircraft division will combine with another strong profits rise on the defence side to underpin a solid performance. NatWest Markets

the broker, is forecasting an increase in full-year profits on Thursday, of almost a third to £590 million. That compares with £436 million last time. Earnings are expected to grow from 74.3p to

96.9p. NatWest gives warning that defence margins may initially show signs of shrinkage despite double digit sales growth. The effect will have been created by the internal re-organisation designed to isolate the Airbus operations. This will have resulted in a £45 million shortfall in operating profits. After removing this effect margins actually appear stable.

British Aerospace now sits on £6 billion in cash and has an order book worth more than £12 billion.

Losses on the commercial aircraft side will have more than halved from £78 million to £26 million following the closure of Jetstream 41 production at the end of the first half.

The payout is expected to grow 25 per cent to 19.5p.

RANK ORGANISATION: The key to any improved performance from the leisure group will depend on its capital expenditure programme. Unfortunately, it will probably be too early for full-year figures on Friday, to reflect the heavy expenditure being made on the holidays division and Hard Rock Café.

Pre-tax profits are expected to show a small downturn from £297 million to £293 million with earnings a share also showing a decline from 24.1p to 23.5p.

There has been a question mark raised over Hard Rock Café in recent weeks, after the profits warning from its main rival, Planet Hollywood. But its contribution to group profits is still expected to have grown by £1 million to £47 million.

At the half-way stage, the group raised the interim payout by 5 per cent and confirmed that second half trading had been in line with expectations. Therefore, brokers are unperturbed by suggestions that the final payout may be cut. Most of them are looking for a 1p increase to 18p.

PSBR precedes sales figures as Bank falls under spotlight

The first economic focus of the week will be tomorrow's publication of January's public sector borrowing requirement. January is a big month for the consensus view of the market, compiled by Standard & Poor's MMS, is for a repayment of borrowing or negative PSBR of £6.3 billion after a PSBR of £1.4 billion in December.

On Wednesday, January retail sales figures are eagerly awaited for more comprehensive evidence of activity on the high street in the key post-Christmas sales period. MMS has a consensus forecast of a 0.9 per cent rise in volumes compared with flat sales in December.

On Thursday, January M4 money supply and bank lending figures are published, but

the main focus of the day will be the appearance of the Governor of the Bank of England and as yet unnamed members of the Monetary Policy Committee before the Commons Treasury Committee. They will be asked to testify on the contents of last week's quarterly *Inflation Report* and also on the split in opinion that emerged in the minutes of the January MPC meeting.

There are no British statistics on Friday, but the financial markets will be heavily focused on the scheduled unveiling of economic stimulus measures by the Japanese Government. This announcement is timed to pre-empt the

meeting on Saturday in London of Group of Seven finance ministers which is expected to centre on the Asian crisis, including the outlook for the world economy and the question of improving surveillance of the world monetary system.

On Sunday, finance ministers are to be joined by employment and social affairs ministers for a jobs summit. Other potentially interesting economic news items include a speech by Wim Duisenberg, President of the European Monetary Institute, to a bankers' club in London today, the Bank of Japan's monthly economic report tomorrow and the presentation of Hong Kong's 1998-99 budget on Wednesday.

JANET BUSH

Interplay of Bank's insiders and outside economists

From Professor J. H. Wood Sir, The votes of the outside economist members of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee to raise interest rates in January compared with the preference of the Bank's resident staff for no change reported in your columns (February 12) is another, but not unusual, chapter in the long conflict between economists and central bankers. To

go back only a century, the Swedish economist Knut Wicksell and the American Irving Fisher, later joined by Sir Ralph Hawtrey, attributed much of the instability of prices to the tendency of banks, especially central banks, to adjust interest rates to economic conditions too little and too late, thereby prolonging aggregate excess demands and supplies. Econo-

mists' recommendations of frequent and significant changes in interest rates have been reinforced by econometric models that continuously grind out new optimal instrument values as new information becomes available in a world in which the future is assumed to be calculable.

One of the reasons that bankers, like others who bear the consequences of their decisions, frequently delay action is their awareness of uncertainty (a word used in this context in the February 12 Commentary of your City Editor). A rise in interest rates might not be unimportant to debtors, and it might not be a bad thing if the central bank were to deserve the accusation of concern for the condition of financial firms. Rather risk a little inflation than a credit crunch, and who knows what then? Perhaps better wait and see. Something, including more information, might turn up.

Furthermore, unless the Bank is believed by the markets to be resolute in a change, which probably would not have been the case in January, a very severe, possibly dangerous, restriction of credit might be required. This point was made on several occasions by Lord Keynes. It will be interesting to see whether the preferred policies of the economists and the permanent central bankers on the committee converge as they develop a shared experience.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN WOOD
(Professor of Economics,
Wake Forest University, US,
Currently Visiting Fellow,
Clare Hall, Cambridge,
jhw30@hermes.cam.ac.uk)

Seeds of destruction sown in the headlong pursuit of profit

From Mr Mark Goyder Sir, Tony O'Reilly is right about shareholder value (February 5). There is no magic formula for its creation and continuation. Certainly no code of corporate governance will guarantee long-term success. Our conclusion from research into corporate success over decades links sustainable shareholder value to a certain style of leadership. Not the 'hero as leader', but an approach that inspires and infects the whole organisation with goals that excite them and values with which they can identify. Investigations of fraud and corporate disaster tell the same story. In the absence of a clear framework of values a business can sow the seeds of its destruction when it chases headlong after financial results.

That's why we need a new corporate governance agenda. Boards cannot second-guess

every entrepreneurial judgment. But they can ask to see measurement of success that extends beyond last year's financial results and includes assessments of customer loyalty, employee commitment, product innovation and public confidence. For it is in these awkward corners that the first signs of threat to shareholder value will be found.

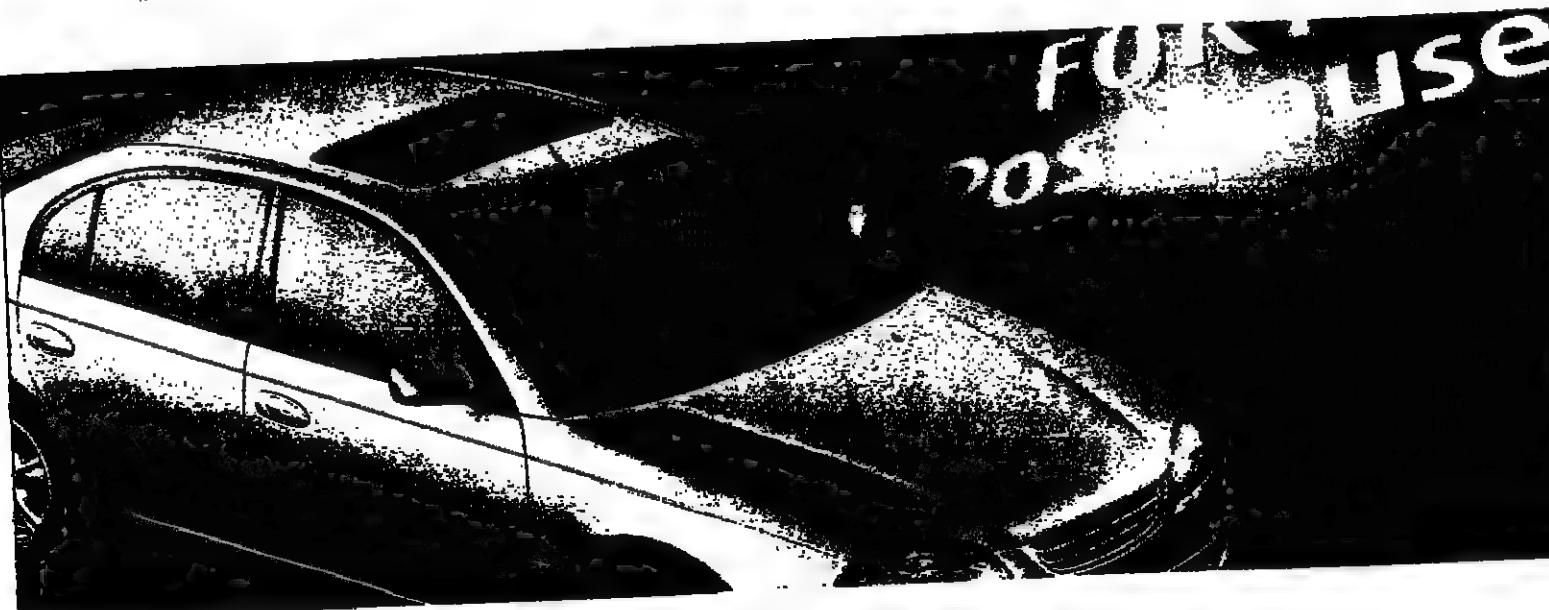
If the Hampel committee had done something to alert boards to this more inclusive approach to the measurement and questioning of a company's progress, then their conclusions would have been helpful to the 57 varieties of company that are all searching for shareholder value in their own way.

Yours faithfully,
MARK GOYDER
Centre for Tomorrow's
Company,
19 Buckingham Street,
WC2

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FACTS

Market cap: £3 billion
Total revenue (1996): £4.3 billion
Pre-tax loss (96): £28 million, after exceptional charges of £263 million relating to the disposal of Parsons
Employees (end 96): 42,500
Activities: Commercial and defence aircraft engines, industrial power generation, marine propulsion systems and other engineering, design, manufacture, financing and after-market.

THE BOARD

Sir Ralph Robins has been chairman since 1992, having joined Rolls-Royce in 1955. He was elected to the board in 1982 and became managing director in 1984.

John Rose, chief executive, was elected to the board in 1992. Having joined the company in 1984, he had been managing director of the aerospace group before he was promoted to the top. Lord Moore of Lower Marsh, non-executive deputy chairman, was appointed to the post in 1986, having joined the board two years earlier. He was Transport Secretary under Margaret Thatcher, after being a junior minister at the Department of Energy.

Sir Gordon Higginson, another non-executive director, was the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Southampton, which is noted for aeronautical engineering.

Peter Byrom, another non-executive director, was a director of NM Rothschild & Sons, adviser to Rolls-Royce, joined the Rolls-Royce board last year. He is a former deputy chairman of T&N, the components manufacturer.

Harold Mourgue, another non-executive director, chaired Keweenaw, the appliances company, until 1986. He joined Rolls's board in 1985.

Sir Robin Nicholson, the final non-executive director, was an executive director of Pilkington, the glass group, until 1988 and was chief scientific adviser at the Cabinet Office. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society.

The rest of the board are Michael Townsend, finance director, John Green, Paul Holden, Philip Ruffles, Richard Turner and James Guyatt. Charles Blandell is company secretary.

When the public hears the name Rolls-Royce, it thinks of motor cars. That is the cross that must be borne by Rolls-Royce plc, the aircraft-engine maker.

Rolls-Royce plc is the authentic Rolls-Royce company, inasmuch as it owns the brand. The carmaker is an entirely separate company, owned by Vickers, and "Rollers" use the name and bonnet badge under licence.

Commercially, the blurred identity of the two companies has benefited Rolls-Royce plc salespeople. The cars are status symbols worldwide. Recently, this ambiguity has created tension. Vickers is selling Rolls-Royce Motor Cars and has claimed that Rolls-Royce plc is using the licence to steer the carmaker into the hands of BMW, its joint-venture partner.

To understand the current spat, one needs a brief history of how the carmaker and the aero-engine maker grew up together. Rolls-Royce made its first aero engine in 1914, seven years after Charles Rolls and Henry Royce established a factory in Derby to make Silver Ghost cars, and four years after Charles Rolls's death in a plane crash.

Rolls-Royce's history of engineering excellence includes the Merlin engine, a staple of Battle of Britain planes such as the Spitfire. The Derwent powered the Meteor, the first jet aircraft in the UK, and Rolls-Royce engines made the Harrier the first vertical take-off fighter.

The business side of the business turned sour, though, and Rolls Royce Ltd went bankrupt in February 1971, a fact the company understandably omits from a potted history used for promotions.

The main reason for the bankruptcy was a contract to develop and supply the RB211 engine to the Lockheed TriStar. It met technical difficulties, delays and cost overruns. Receivers and the Government salvaged what they could. The profitable motor car assets were hived off into a separate company, which was floated and then bought by Vickers in 1980.

Rolls-Royce (1971), as the aerospace rump was known, came under state control before being returned to private ownership in 1987. Rolls-Royce plc, as it then became, bought Northern Engineering Industries (NEI) in 1989, expanding its existing activity in industrial power generation.

Two more deals gave Rolls-Royce its current shape. In 1995, it bought Allison Engine of the US. Then the Parsons turbine power generator bus-

CORPORATE PROFILE: Rolls-Royce



Sir Ralph Robins, left, chairman of Rolls-Royce; John Rose, chief executive; a Rolls-Royce engine on an Emirates aircraft; an engineer working on a Rolls-Royce Trent 800 engine for a Boeing 777; and the computer-aided design that has been integral to the Trent development programme

ness, part of the NEI portfolio, was sold off last March. Stripping out Parsons from the 1996 results, these deals meant that nearly three-quarters of the group's £4 billion continuing operations turnover came from aerospace, and the remainder from industrial power.

Like the rest of the aerospace industry, Rolls-Royce has been enjoying a boom in orders. A wave of replacement orders has been driving the market and Rolls has done particularly well in grabbing market share from US General Electric and Pratt & Whitney.

Rolls-Royce is now a major supplier to Airbus, the European aircraft-making consortium. It recently received a £200 million, risk-sharing loan from the Government to fund new variations on its big Trent engine for the new Airbus A340-type airliners.

Sir Ralph Robins, chairman, says that the group is repaying about £30 million a year of "launch aid" from

previous projects. As with British Aerospace, however, the total return to the Government is not disclosed.

For Boeing, Rolls-Royce again supplies engines to a broad range of aircraft. The boom in the cyclical aerospace industry has caused plenty of problems for Boeing, which shed too many staff in leaner times. Rolls-Royce had difficulty coping with the surge too, encountering milder bottlenecks as some suppliers proved unable to raise the pace sufficiently.

These problems are now over and the main engine plant in Derby has started 1998 with some impressively ambitious improvement targets. Assembly and testing of Trents currently takes 26 days.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

"In total, we estimate that some 31 per cent, by value, of the outstanding order book is accounted for by Asian customers. All of those orders are to customers who, with the exception of Singapore, would be considered candidates for external or cancellation, although again it is possible that other operators could take up their slots. The company's exposure to the region could have a material effect on profits." *Cive Forester-Walker, Henderson Craswell*

"We are buyers because there are still a couple of strong years of recovery to come. There's evidence that the pricing of new engines is becoming less competitive. The only caveat is the exposure to the Far East, but if you get delays rather than cancellations it could actually flatten the cycle, which could make it easier for Rolls." *Engineering team, Credit Suisse First Boston de Zotes*

The aim is 15 by the end of the year.

Anxiety over the ability of Asian airlines to stick to their order timetables has affected most aerospace stocks. Sir Ralph believes that deferrals could actually benefit the industry by flattening out the cycle of boom and bust, leading to a "soft landing".

Industry observers and rivals sometimes question whether Rolls has paid enough attention to profit margins in its recent order triumphs. Sir Ralph admits that engine sales do not drive profits, and says: "Frankly, the money is made on spare parts. The margins in aftermarket are significantly better than the margins in new equipment, but you have to sell the new equipment first."

Sir Ralph says that 30 per cent of Rolls-Royce sales are in the aftermarket; he will not say how much profit. Charterhouse Tilney, the stockbroker, reckons that the operating margins vary from the 5 to 10

per cent obtained on overhaul to the 25 to 30 per cent achieved on spares.

With planes flying longer—the Tristar and RB211 that bankrupted the company are flying still—there is clearly good money to be made from services and spare parts, and recent joint ventures in the US and the Far East have pushed Rolls forward in this market.

Sir Ralph has set the group the target of 10 per cent earnings growth over the next five years. His own earnings—total remuneration was £780,000 in 1996—should start moving in the opposite direction, according to the Crisp Consulting corporate pay analysis. It says that he was paid more than twice as much as he should have been, and suggests £384,000 as a more appropriate figure. The non-execs, on the other hand, were underpaid by 4 per cent. Crisp says that there should be more of them and gives the company marks of 4/10 for fat cat quotient.

Integrity Works rated the group's "ethical expression" at 5/10, saying that its internal code of business conduct "has a legalistic tone and consists largely of a list of prohibitions". Arrangements for monitoring adherence were "fairly rudimentary", the consultancy said.

The sort of quantum leap made by the first jet engine is unlikely in the current market, which is all about cost and weight. Rolls engineers have small innovations that cannot yet be included on the Trent engines because of the extra cost to airlines. The bigger improvements are more likely to come from advances in materials science towards lighter, stronger metals.

There are costs that can be cut at the Derby plant—in the manufacture of the toughest turbine blades, for instance. This has some labour-intensive processes, such as quality control, and Rolls may ultimately make it cheaper by using smaller furnaces that would make casting more precise.

In the Trent and its unique three-shaft design, Rolls has an extremely flexible engine that can be scaled to cope with new planes as and when they are launched, reducing development costs to the envy of rivals.

In coming months, Rolls's exposure to Asia will continue to be monitored closely. There has already been one analyst's note arguing that its exposure is too high.

Close attention will also be paid to an intriguing High Court action started by a Panamanian company, AeroSpace Engineering Design Corporation. It claims that Rolls-Royce has not paid the agreed middleman's commission on engine sales to the Royal Saudi Air Force. These were part of the Al Yamamah II sale. Rolls said that it vigorously defended the allegation. In the unlikely event that it comes to court, the UK public will know an awful lot more about the workings of international arms deals.

ADAM JONES

OUR VERDICT

Ethical expression... 5/10
Fat-cat quotient... 4/10
Financial record... 4/10
Share performance... 5/10
Attitude to employees... 8/10
Strength of brand... 10/10
Innovation... 9/10
Annual report... 5/10
City star rating... 5/10
Future prospects... 6/10

Total... 61/100
Ethical policy is evaluated by Integrity Works. The fat-cat quotient, in which last year's mean pay premium score is 10, is provided by Crisp Consulting.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sale
Australia \$	2.53	2.56
Austria Sch	21.95	20.20
Belgium Fr	94.67	96.71
Canada C\$	2.475	2.507
Dynor Cyp	0.916	0.945
Denmark Kr	11.94	11.08
Finland Mk	9.50	9.67
France Fr	10.45	9.87
Germany DM	5.14	5.22
Greece Dr	496	477
Hong Kong \$	13.48	12.28
Iceland	120	110
Ireland Pt	1.25	1.16
Israel Sh	6.27	6.80
Italy Lit	3117	3080
Japan Yen	219.33	201.80
Malta	0.684	0.684
Netherlands Gld	2.548	2.253
New Zealand \$	2.95	2.71
Norway Kr	12.98	12.98
Portugal Esc	317.03	295.00
S. Africa Rd	8.77	7.81
Spain Ps	353.79	345.00
Sweden Kr	14.08	12.98
Switzerland Sfr	1.48	1.48
Turkey Lira	372.37	352.19
USA \$	1.740	1.597

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading on Friday.

CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND

US dollar
1.8365 (-0.0140)
German mark
2.9848 (+0.0245)
Exchange index
104.9 (+0.5)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share
3446.2 (-6.3)
FTSE 100
5582.3 (-47.4)
New York Dow Jones
8370.10 (+180.61)
Tokyo Nikkei Avge
16791.01 (-249.05)

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 38

MAXWELL'S DEMON

(a) An imaginary being postulated by James Clerk Maxwell. The demon, situated by a hole in a partition between two boxes, would allow only fast molecules through in one direction and the other cool. This would be contrary to the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

MAGNETO

(b) A Latinised corruption of the name of Thomas Mahieu, secretary to Chatterbox de Medici and a great French book-collector. The name is used to designate a French style of book-binding with elaborate gold tooling, used for some of the books in his library.

ESCAPEMENT

(c) The intricate mechanism linking the vibrator (pendulum or hair/balance spring) with the drive (weights or mainspring) to produce regulated movements of the hands. Harrison (circa 1746) used a bimetallic strip independent of temperature change. It produced a chronometer accurate enough for navigation.

MAGNETO

(d) A generator, usually coupled with an interrupter to produce a spark for ignition in internal combustion engines. These are independent of a battery. The magneto was superceded in cars by a coil, which needed a battery, but gave a much faster spark at low speed; ie, good for starting.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1... Nh3+2 Qxh3 (2 Bxh3 Qx2-mates) 2... Qx2-3 Kh1 Qe1+ 4 Bf1 and Black wins.

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DECEASED: Henry William Iles of Green, Hampshire, Regimentsman, The Hampshire Regiment, died on 27.12.1997. All claims to the estate of H.W. Iles, deceased, should be sent to the executor, Mr. J. H. Iles, 28, Bathurst Road, Bathurst, NSW 2162, Australia, on or before 20.02.1998.

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Institutions plan court showdown over Astec

By MARTIN BARROW

SDX leading institutions are expected to ask the High Court this week to block Emerson Electric's controversial attempt to remove three directors of Astec (BSR) and then to cut future dividends.

Equitable Life, Clerical & Medical, British Steel Pension Fund and Credit Suisse Asset Management have joined Royal & Sun Alliance and Electra Fleming, forming a bloc owning 13 per cent of electronics firm Astec. A further six big investors have agreed to share the expenses of the court action on behalf of minority shareholders.

They argue that Emerson's actions contravene section 459 of the Companies Act, which deals with unfair prejudice, where one shareholder is deemed to disadvantage another. The institutions contend that Emerson's actions, if allowed to proceed, will seriously undermine the rights of other shareholders in London.

Emerson, a \$16 billion (£9.75 billion) US company, has angered institutions with its attempt to gain full control of Astec. It already owns 31.1 per cent and has said it is considering offering 110 a share for the outstanding equity. Analysts say the proposed terms undervalue the business. Salomon Smith Barney has valued the company at around 175p a share, against

Friday's closing price of 120p. Astec's current market value is £374 million.

Emerson has requisitioned an extraordinary meeting in London on March 9, seeking the removal of Mike Arrowsmith, finance director; Neil Stewart, who co-founded Astec in Hong Kong in 1971; and Michael Smith. Each would be replaced by an Emerson nominee.

The egm will go ahead, whatever the outcome this week in the High Court. The resolutions are certain to be approved, although the board changes could be delayed by the legal action.

The scale of opposition in the City is believed to have surprised Emerson, which is under pressure to put an end to the legal wrangle by making a higher offer.

Astec directors who oppose Emerson are likely to seek meetings with US institutions who hold Astec shares. These include Prudential of the US, Merrill Lynch, PNB and Morgan Guaranty. Although their combined holding of around 1.4 million shares is small, they could prove influential.

Emerson acquired a 45 per cent interest in Astec in 1989 when the companies merged interests in electronic components. It gained more than 50 per cent in March 1997.



On course for Oer: Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, the yachtsman, intends to raise £1 million towards his round-the-world yacht race on the unregulated Oer market. Clipper Ventures, which organises and promotes the biennial Clipper race, is run by Sir Robin, left, and William Ward, who wants the money to organise events in non-race years

Cidermakers' woes are more than just a tale of Two Dogs alcopops

Martin Waller looks at why shares in the apple-crushers have dived

Five years ago, it was going to be the drink that would save the day for various small companies being squeezed out of the market by the mighty brewers. The time when cider was associated with yokels with straw in their hair was long gone; cider was young, it was cool, it was happening — and it had a built-in tax advantage over the bottled lagers that were the rage.

Over the past ten days, by contrast, two out of the three quoted cider producers have had to admit that bid talks have broken down because, quite simply, no one was interested in buying them even at their current shrunken market valuations.

Merrydown, whose shares traded at more than £4 at the start of the decade, ended Friday at 47p, valuing the company at little more than £4 million.

Matthew Clark, just ahead of £8 a share in its 1996 heyday, were quoted at 194p on Friday night, giving a market capitalisation of about £170 million.

Merrydown will now be forced to raise fresh capital; Matthew Clark, which has other interests in wine shipping and bottled water, has been spurned by the third bidder, and the one the market regards as the most successful, HP Bulmer.

Bulmer itself has seen its shares fall to their lowest level since 1993, after a 14 per cent fall in pre-tax profits announced in December. With the shares at 363p, the company is valued at about £190 million.

There is a widespread belief that the spurned companies' misfortunes are all down to the threat from alcopops, or alcoholic fruit mixtures, and that recovery is inevitable once this fad has passed. Matthew Clark's premium cider brands, which include Diamond White, K and Blackthorn, were certainly competing with those moodish drinks for the younger drinker's pocket money.

Merrydown was actually the first company to import an alcopop, in the form of Two Dogs, into Britain. However, it was forced to hand distribution over to one of the big brewers, Scottish & Newcastle, because it could not cope with, first, the demand, and then the arrival of competing brands of alcopops created by the brewers.

In fact, the truth is more complex. Actual cider consumption is not too far below its peak, and is well ahead of its level before the marketing spend was put behind the brands revived or launched in the mid-1990s. In 1994 the

industry produced 98 million gallons; in 1995 and 1996 this output was up to around 115 million gallons. Provisional figures for 1997 suggest 106 million gallons, while forecasts for this year are for around 102 million.

Charles Winston, drinks analyst with HSBC James Capel, the broker, says: "The market has only fallen to about 1994 levels by volume. It's not as if the consumers have suddenly run away from cider and they are not drinking it. The decline is nothing like as catastrophic as the share prices might suggest."

Alcopops may be falling in popularity, he says, but these



Cider's yokel image is gone

have been replaced in young drinkers' affections by mixer drinks based on well-known brands of spirits.

Cider was hit initially both by alcopops and by the spread of nitro-keg ales such as Caffreys, made by Bass, and Kilkenny, a Guinness brand. Alcopops hurt sales of premium bottled ciders; to make things worse the brewers, which are not in the apple-crushing business, replaced draught cider dispensers with their own nitro-keg taps in the pubs that they controlled.

Meanwhile, beer-drinking Kenneth Clarke, then Chancellor, huffed away in his November 1995 Budget at the built-in tax advantage that had meant that cider was under-taxed by comparison with lager or beer. He put 5p extra duty onto every pint.

"The speed of growth of nitro-keg is slowing rapidly, and may even be in mild decline already," says Mr Winston. However, he still does

not think that rosy times are back for all the cidermakers. He is particularly concerned about whether the money being put into marketing the premium bottled ciders will pay off in terms of higher sales, because the indications are that all the growth is now in the draught market.

This would be good news for HP Bulmer, which has three strong draught brands, Woodpecker, Strongbow and Scrumpy Jack. However, it would suggest that Matthew Clark, which is shifting its marketing emphasis from draught brands such as Old English and Red Rock to just the one, Blackthorn, could suffer.

Both companies have responded to the situation the same way, by pumping millions of pounds into marketing. Between them, they budgeted a total of £17 million for advertising last year, an option not open to the much smaller Merrydown.

Robert MacNevin, marketing director of Matthew Clark, says that the switch to concentrating on Blackthorn is now largely complete, and it is his company's policy to focus on the one strong brand. "The cider market in certain areas is beginning to pick up," he says. Draught sales are up by 2 or 3 per cent year on year, even if the off-trade is still slipping. Premium bottled cider sold in pubs is down by 15 per cent.

Charles Winston at HSBC James Capel says that it is the switch to lower-margin draught cider and away from expensive bottles, rather than competition from other types of drink, that is at the heart of the industry's troubles. "The chances of such a fashion drink, and so passé a one at that, returning to favour are minimal, however much money they spend on marketing it," he said.

Mr MacNevin, for his part, believes that there is still plenty of market share to go for, because cider still runs at only 6 to 7 per cent of beer consumption.

Both men agree, though, that the worst of the threat from alcopops is over, and that the mid-1990s passion for flavoured alcoholic fruit juices will come to be seen as a temporary aberration.

The damage to alcopops may, paradoxically, have been done by the perception, hotly denied by their producers, that they are attractive to under-age drinkers. Mr MacNevin says: "The all-important 18 to 24 age group," he says, "don't want to be associated with drinks that they think their kid brother or sister may be drinking."

SBC named top research house

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

THE controversy over staff selection at the Union Bank of Switzerland and SBC Warburg Dillon Read after their merger announcement has been fuelled by a new ranking, which sees SBC analysts come out on top.

US magazine *Institutional Investor* has named SBC Warburg the best research house in Europe. UBS, which ranked second last year, was beaten into third place by Merrill Lynch, the top-rated Wall Street research house.

Senior bankers at the newly

merged Swiss banking group are said to be ditching UBS analysts, some of whom are more highly rated than their Warburg counterparts, to eliminate UBS's "star culture". A total of 3,000 UK redundancies are expected.

The magazine said: "SBC Warburg tops the ranking. Merrill Lynch unseats UBS this year, capturing second place. The December announcement that UBS and SBC are combining to form the world's second-largest bank sent a harsh message to Europe's research departments: even record profits do not guarantee job security. The survivors, assuming the firm retains its all-stars, will constitute a power house. Tallying the places earned by SBC and UBS gives the combined firm almost twice the number of positions as Merrill."

The rankings were supplied by 73 London bankers.

D&T calls for simpler tartan tax

By CAROLINE MERRELL

DELOITTE & TOUCHE, the chartered accountant, is calling on the Government to simplify the "tartan tax test".

This test would force taxpayers who spend significant time in Scotland to keep on-going records of their whereabouts. Deloitte's plea comes as clauses in the Scotland Bill concerning tax-varying powers are set to be debated.

By April 2000 the Scottish parliament could vary the basic rate of tax by up to 3p. "Government has proposed two tests to determine whether someone is a Scottish taxpayer," said David Sinton, tax partner.

"This test is complex and costly." He suggested a tax based simply on the location of the principal home.

Property declines in owner absence

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

SOME prime London properties are falling into disrepair because their foreign leaseholders are not paying service charges or even ground rents, according to a survey from Credit Suisse Private Banking.

In areas such as Knightsbridge and Belgravia, foreign ownership is estimated to have reached up to 45 per cent, mostly to rent. Although this has boosted values, a minority of foreign landlords, many of whom are impossible to locate, are increasingly failing to pay up, delaying renovations and repairs indefinitely.

The London property market is suffering from a sharp downturn in interest from Far Eastern clients. The survey, which was carried out among 50 estate agents and managing agents in the London area, found that 72 per cent believed that the decline in Far Eastern buyers would result in a drop in prices for new property developments this year, perhaps by as much as 15 per cent. More than 60 per cent of central London estate agents said that they had seen a significant downturn in interest in the residential property market from Far Eastern investors, and 75 per cent of these believe that this is directly due to the problems in that region.

On the positive side, 60 per cent of estate agents said that there had been a significant increase in demand for residential property in London from American companies and individuals and 22 per cent reported rising interest from South Africans.

The survey suggests there is a growing shortage of properties valued at more than £1 million in London at a time of escalating demand, and that this is driving prices higher. City bonuses, rather than National Lottery winnings, are cited as fuelling growth in this price bracket.

Deadline looms in ethics competition

THE deadline is nearing for this year's *The Times*/NatWest business ethics competition. Students who wish to claim the £3,000 prize need to answer the question of how they would cope with a dilemma that may cause seasoned business leaders to cry for help.

Entrants must imagine that they are the head of a multinational company that has been creating jobs and prosperity in a developing country. The Government there has been ejected in a military coup — and power now lies in the hands of dictators who care little about human rights.

The company chief is not in any direct danger — as a cash-rich capitalist, he is not someone the regime wants

to wipe out. However, people back home are shocked by the violent character of the new regime and are demanding that the company take some kind of action.

What to do? To pull out of the country would mean putting all the employees out of work, and maybe reducing them to starvation. Financial considerations might suggest stripping assets out of the country to Swiss bank accounts and refusing further investment until the new rulers restore democracy — but playing hardball with a military dictatorship can have nasty side-effects.

Meanwhile, protesters are boycotting the company's products and the situation is spiralling towards a public

relations nightmare. What is the way out?

Entrants do not need to be studying business to think of a solution. No technical knowledge is required — all it takes is a few hours' thought and an essay of up to 1,000 words.

Authors of the six best-argued entries will be invited to discuss their solution with a panel of judges — including John Monks, General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress, Derek Wanless, chief executive of NatWest, and Patience Wheatcroft, business editor of *The Times*.

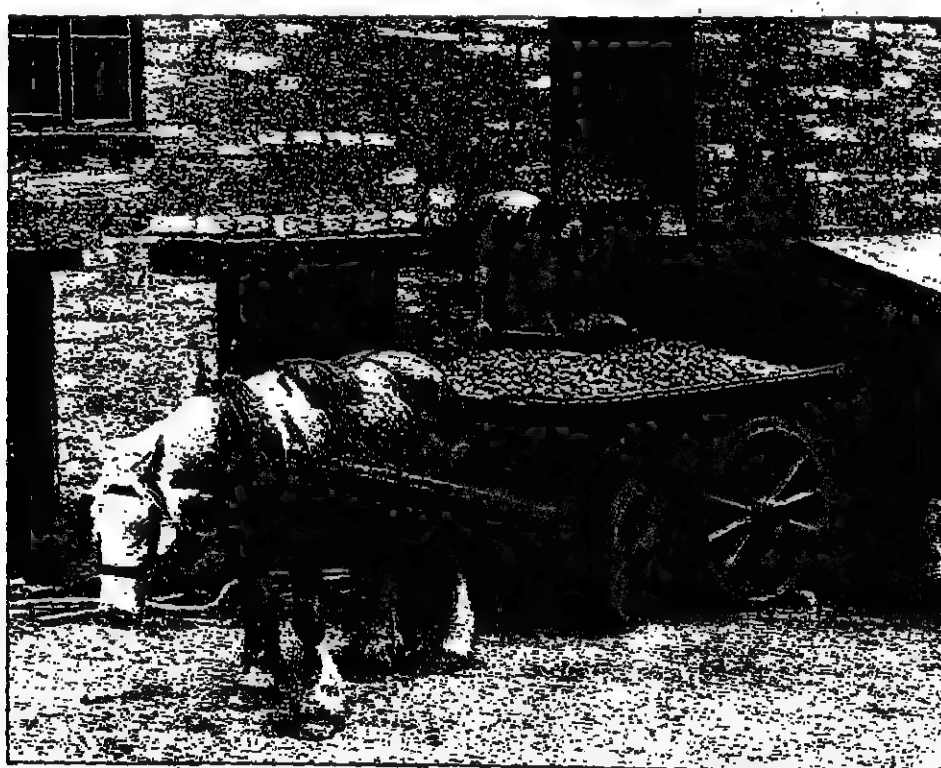
Last year's winner, Owain Evans, won £3,000 for his university and the same amount for himself — and he is now finishing his degree. The second

prize is £2,000 and the third prize is £1,000.

The year before, Chris Ayres, then a politics student at Hull University, came in the top six and so progressed to the interview stage of the competition. He collected the top prize, went on to win a place studying journalism at the City University and is now a business reporter on *The Times*.

If you feel equal to the challenge, or know someone who may be, now is the time to act. Entry forms can be found in NatWest branches and essays must be sent to Room 217, 41 Lothbury, London, EC2P 2BP, before February 27.

FRASER NELSON



Preparing for the cider brew at Castle Cary, Somerset, in 1936 — long before alcopops

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Pouring oil on troubled economic waters

For anyone who lived through the 1970s, the price of oil is something of enormous economic significance, etched deep in the memory by the two oil crises which nearly brought the western economies to their knees. All the more remarkable then that, outside professional circles, the recent sharp falls in oil prices should have occasioned barely a comment. The reason speaks volumes about the nature of the modern economy.

The price of oil is currently about \$14 a barrel, down from last year's peak of \$24. November's decision by Opec, the producers' cartel, to increase production quotas was critical, but the effect has been compounded by weaker demand from Asia following the region's economic crisis, and by warm winter weather in the northern hemisphere. Remarkably, recent tensions in the Middle East, far from strengthening the price, may even have weakened it, as the markets have speculated on

the prospects for increases in the permitted level of Iraqi oil exports. An oil glut is a serious prospect.

What a turnaround from the 1970s. The oil price rise of 1974 was one of those defining economic events, like the collapse of communism or the East Asian crisis, which economists fail to see or analyse in advance but then manage to turn into the foundation of a major research industry afterwards. It broke on the world like a fresh, all-engulfing wave. Unthought of before, nothing was quite the same afterwards. In the scope and reach of its economic impact, it was akin to the effects of a major war.

Up to that point, the price of oil had been below \$5 a barrel for more than a hundred years, and immediately before the crisis broke, it had been trading at \$3. Afterwards, it hit \$13, an increase

of more than 300 per cent. This followed large rises in other commodity prices and strong demand pressures. Throughout the West, inflation soared. At one point, the annual increase in British producers' input costs (which is now running at minus 9.7 per cent) was 70 per cent. Consumers faced steep rises in all prices including, of course, petrol at the pump, and there was widespread talk of a return to wartime-style petrol rationing. RPI inflation peaked at nearly 27 per cent in 1975. Meanwhile, the financial markets underwent a huge expansion as vast amounts of petrodollars had to be recycled from the newly enriched Middle-Eastern oil producers to the countries struggling to pay for their oil imports.

Policy-makers in most Western countries chose to accommodate



ROGER BOOTLE

the price rises in order to minimise the adverse effects on employment, but they ended up with more of both unemployment and inflation. This was the age of stagflation. By hook or by crook, though, they managed to ease inflation down from the peaks. Then in 1979, it happened all over again. Oil, which had been trad-

ing just below \$13, shot up to a peak of \$36, an increase of some 200 per cent. In terms of today's money, that price represents over \$80 a barrel. Inflation also took off again, but now, across the world, central bankers and governments cried "enough". Interest rates were raised to whatever level was necessary to reduce inflation, at whatever cost to unemployment. Sado-monetarism was born.

There was another brief flurry during the Gulf War, when oil prices doubled, reaching \$34 at the peak, but on the whole the trend since 1980 has been downwards. In money terms, at \$14 a barrel, the price is now back where it was before the 1979 price rise. But if you adjust for inflation, the price is nearly back to its pre-1974 crisis level.

So why is there no rejoicing? One reason can be quickly laid to

rest. You might think that as an oil producer, Britain's interests are now aligned with Opec's, and that we are net losers from a lower oil price, not least because this will lead to lower tax receipts from North Sea Oil. But this completely misconstrues our position. We are also large consumers of oil. Our net export position is now small — only about £5 billion a year. True, this still means that the direct losses for producers outweigh the gains for consumers. But there are indirect gains, not least the reduction in inflation and the improvement in the economic environment in our major export markets in Europe. As for tax revenues from oil production, these now amount to only £4 billion, or 1/2 per cent of GDP.

A stronger reason is that the recent fall in oil prices has been gradual, in contrast to the sudden

shocks of 1974 and 1979. Also, the fall is not yet believed to be permanent, and it has not yet had much effect on the price of petrol at the pumps, which is still some 5 per cent higher than it was year ago, largely due to increases in duty. Indeed, there will be further duty rises after the Budget.

But there is a deeper answer. Like coal and corn before it, oil is simply not as important to the Western economies as it was. Energy conservation is only part of the story, for we still consume more oil than we used to. The real reason is that the expansion of services, and particularly the more recent explosion in information-based activity, which is a major source of recent economic growth, uses very little energy in relation to value-added. There can be no stronger testament to the revolutionary nature of the changes sweeping through our economy than our apparent insouciance at the undoing of what caused us so much misery not so very long ago.

Asia looms large at global finance talks

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE Asian crisis will dominate the thinking of finance ministers and the world's top central bankers this week as it tops the agendas both at today's meeting of European Finance Ministers and a conclave of the Group of Seven industrialised nations on Saturday.

Today's Ecofin meeting in Brussels will be attended by Michel Camdessus, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, at the invitation of Gordon Brown, the Chancellor. During the UK presidency of the European Union, Mr Brown is expected to be President of Ecofin.

The presence of the IMF chief will help to focus discussions on the lessons the international community can draw from events in Asia. The debate will then continue in a broader context when the G7 gathers on Saturday.

Mr Brown's suggestion that Mr Camdessus attend Ecofin came in a letter in January in which the Chancellor offered ideas "to help prevent such crises recurring and to reflect on whether we could improve our techniques for handling crises when they occur."

One of the Chancellor's most interesting points is that the IMF itself should consider being more transparent in its dealings with member countries. He acknowledged the sometimes necessary confidentiality of policy dialogue with members but added: "I believe there are ways in which the Fund could and should begin to make its economic package in public, certainly when policy advice has been given over a period and not acted on."

This is a view endorsed in *The Times* today by David Folkerts-Landau, former head

of capital markets surveillance at the Fund (see page 46).

Mr Brown also urged Mr Camdessus to examine doing more to promote transparency in all countries about the operation of economic policy and the operations of financial institutions. He urged the IMF quickly to bring forward proposals for a code of conduct on transparency in fiscal policy as well as consider a widening of the IMF's articles to cover capital account issues. Another major strand of Saturday's G7 discussion on the outlook for the world economy will be Japan's plans for extra stimulus to the economy.

Japan is due to announce an economic package on Friday, timed to pre-empt growing unease among its G7 partners about Japan's ability to push through remedial policy changes fast enough.

Lawrence Summers, Depu-

ty US Treasury Secretary, derided Japanese efforts so far as "virtual policy" and said that "substantial, early additional fiscal action is critically important, not just for Japan, but for the region as a whole."

Eisuke Sakakibara, Japan's vice finance minister for international affairs, meets Mr Summers in Washington tomorrow en route to the G7. He told Japanese TV yesterday that Japan had made the necessary policy changes but the message had not yet fully reached foreign governments.

Friday's policy package is thought likely to include the front-loading of public works and some deregulation measures but large-scale fiscal stimulus plans are not expected until after the 1998 Budget passes through parliament in mid-April.

Trials and errors, page 46



Professor David Lane of Cyclacel says a cure for cancer may be just a decade away

Cyclacel leads the way in remedy for cancer

By PAUL DURMAN

"ONE does not always have the chance in one's career to work with someone who has 'Nobel prize' written all over his face," says Spiro Rombotis. This ear-catching remark is the explanation Mr Rombotis gives when asked why he wanted to become chief executive of Cyclacel, a start-up company based around the discovery of Professor David Lane, a cancer expert at the University of Dundee. Professor Lane, a seemingly modest man, is clearly used to praise since discovering the gene responsible for the growth of 60 per cent of common cancers.

The p53 gene, first identified in 1978, is said to be the world's most researched gene. Professor Lane suggests that it holds the key to a cure for cancer being found in the next ten years.

Already well decorated by his academic peers, Professor Lane will next month be one of three scientists to receive the prize awarded by the Paul Ehrlich Foundation, a German body named after a leading figure in chemotherapy and cell chemistry at the turn of the century. The Foundation prides itself on its record of honouring future Nobel laureates.

Professor Lane is now spending half his time on

Cyclacel, which is seeking to develop cancer therapies based on his work for the Cancer Research Campaign in Dundee. Cyclacel was the first investment for Merlin Ventures, the biotechnology investment firm headed by Chris Evans, who has made more money from biotech than just about anyone in Britain.

Dr Evans, who calls himself a "financial scientist entrepreneur type", seems to have hit it off with Professor Lane from the moment they met in September 1996. Aside from reputation, Dr Evans said he was attracted to working with Professor Lane because he was not a "jumped-up arrogant academic". For his part, Professor Lane says he was excited by Dr Evans' can-do approach and for finding simple ways of expressing complex biological mechanisms. Merlin invested £2.5 million.

Working with the p53 gene is complicated because the gene has numerous mutations — one of the reasons why the importance of its discovery was not appreciated for several years. Cyclacel is taking a lateral approach, and is working with synthetic protein fragments, or peptides, that play a similar role in tumour suppression.

Professor Lane is excited by

the possibility of isolating the active portion of the protein, thus improving the chances of creating a drug able to penetrate cell walls.

This more scientifically interesting peptide-based approach is also fraught with potential pitfalls. It is still a long way from producing a drug that can be tested on humans. Cyclacel is therefore carrying out random screening of smaller molecules in the hope of finding potentially useful compounds that mimic the behaviour of tumour suppressor genes.

Mr Rombotis says the firm is using its biological knowledge to take a more rational approach to the discovery process. It is also looking around to license other novel anti-cancer agents. These initiatives offer an earlier opportunity for it to start the human trials of a drug that are the real measure of any biotech company's worth.

Professor Lane readily acknowledges the need for Cyclacel to balance the risks involved in its peptide programme.

Cyclacel eventually wants to float on the stock market, but Mr Rombotis said it will need another one or two rounds of private financing before it will be ready to consider such a step.

Treasury expected to reappoint George

The Treasury is widely expected this week to announce the reappointment of Eddie George as Governor of the Bank of England after weeks of speculation about why the Chancellor has taken so long to reach a decision. Mr George is back in London today after visiting South Africa.

The Treasury also has to announce new appointments to the Court of the Bank of England by February 28.

Under the new arrangements laid out in the new Bank of England Bill, four executive directors are to be replaced with non-executive directors.

In addition, three non-executive contracts are due to expire at the end of this month. There has been some speculation that the Governor's appointment may be announced along with the Court appointments.

Christie's may issue statement

Christie's International, the auctioneers, may be forced to issue a statement in the wake of continuing speculation that takeover talks with SBC Warburg Dillon Read, the investment bank, have stalled. Weekend reports claimed that the £500 million offer would be formally called off this week.

Delays in tabling a formal bid have led to suggestions that SBC Warburg has struggled to persuade wealthy private investors to participate in a bid. However, sources close to the bank said yesterday: "Things are still progressing, and relations between the two sides remain good. Nothing has changed."

Philippine peso faces pressure

The Philippine peso could come under further pressure after the International Monetary Fund described the Philippine Government's revenue target for this fiscal year as too optimistic.

IMF officials are understood to have urged the Government to revise downwards its income projections to "more realistic" levels amid a slowdown in business. IMF officials were presented with a tax collection estimate for this year of \$27 billion pesos (£7.8 billion).

Pakistan find

Prospectors have struck a big gas reserve — estimated at 38 billion cubic feet of gas — in Pakistan's southern Sindh province for the second time this month, officials said yesterday. The two discoveries will substantially reduce Pakistan's import bill and ease a domestic shortage of gas.

SK to shrink

One of South Korea's top five "chaebol" business groups is to shrink its network of subsidiaries from 43 to ten. SK Group will slim down through a series of mergers and takeovers.

Honda set to put £400m in UK site

By DOMINIC WALSH

HONDA is poised to deliver a vote of confidence in the UK by announcing plans to produce a new small car at its factory at Swindon, Wiltshire. Observers believe that the Japanese carmaker is planning to invest £400 million in the project, creating up to 700 jobs.

The announcement would provide a timely boost to the British car industry. Toyota recently decided to site a new £400 million small car factory in France, rather than at its existing UK plant at Burnaston, Derbyshire. The announcement will also allay fears over the future of Asian investment here in the wake of the economic crisis in the Far East and Britain's decision not to submerge the pound into the euro at the first opportunity.

Honda, whose Swindon factory already makes the Civic

and the Accord, has been looking for a third model to boost production there. According to a recent study by the Economist Intelligence Unit, the factory's 2,000-plus workforce is the third most efficient in Europe, turning out 64.2 cars per employee per year.

Reports suggest that its new model, which would compete with Ford's Ka and the Fiat Uno, will be unveiled at next month's Geneva motor show. The car, designed to appeal to a younger market than the Civic, is expected to be a revamped version of the Honda Logo, which is made for the Japanese market.

Honda has only about half the shares of the European market held by Toyota and Nissan. This is, in part, because Honda co-operated with Rover before BMW intervened.

Pregnant pause still precarious

By OUR CITY STAFF

MATERNITY leave must now be provided by law in 120 countries, the International Labour Organisation reports, greatly improving working standards for women. But pregnant women still face the threat of losing their job or having their earnings stopped.

The United States, Australia and New Zealand are the only industrialised countries without legislated paid leave for would-be mothers, an ILO study *Maternity Protection at Work* says.

The Czech Republic has the most generous maternity laws, allowing pregnant women 28 weeks off, followed by Hungary with 24 weeks and Italy and Canada with 17 weeks. Eastern European countries have cut back on previously extensive maternity benefits, in particular cash

benefits, due to economic restructuring, the report says.

The ILO standard calls for a minimum 12-week leave and 31 countries guarantee less than that period.

In countries which provide cash benefits through social security, the ILO says a woman should receive not less than two-thirds of her salary with full health benefits.

To qualify for paid leave, women normally must have worked for a minimum amount of time.

"The situation of workers who become pregnant shortly after beginning a new job is often precarious," the ILO warned.

The ILO said women need legal guarantees that they will not lose their jobs after childbirth and in the period after returning to work.

US groups to rival CMC in pursuit of vulnerable borrowers

Fears rise of new lending scandal

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

FEARS that vulnerable borrowers could be dragged into another lending scandal are growing as US lenders rush to take the place of City Mortgage Corporation, the controversial lender hit by tough action by the Office of Fair Trading last week.

CMC's US parent, Cityscape Financial Corporation, last week said that the OFT action — which banned CMC from using punitive interest rates and stiff early redemption penalties — had seriously damaged its financial state. Cityscape had to write off \$185 million (£13 million) from the value of CMC's business.

Meanwhile, the OFT, which has campaigned to protect so-called "non-status" borrowers — people whose poor credit

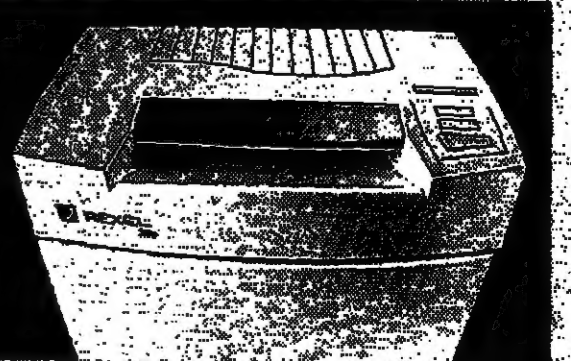
histories or erratic incomes bar them from getting loans from banks and building societies — is investigating complaints against CMC and could strip it of its consumer credit licence.

This will cheer the six US-linked non-status lenders that have been far less aggressive than CMC towards borrowers. Firms such as Kensington Mortgage Company, set up by Marty Fetengold, a former Goldman Sachs banker in 1994, and Preferred Mortgages, a joint venture between IMC of the US and the Roth Property Group, have been joined by more overtly American lenders such as Southern Pacific, First Alliance and the Money Store. They believe that the UK non-status market is untapped and could grow to 10 per cent of conventional

lending, and have preferred to profit from the higher interest they can charge borrowers without upsetting the OFT. Non-status loans tend to be 3 to 6 per cent over Libor, the inter-bank lending rate.

Such wide margins and the UK's lack of controls over lenders are attracting more interest from the US, where the non-status market is well developed and competition is fierce. Residential Funding Corporation, part of GMAC, the finance subsidiary of General Motors and Amax, one of the largest US specialist lenders, have plans to expand in the UK. Mortgage brokers expect the influx to provoke a backlash by high street lenders, who have been relaxing their attitude to borrowers with debts.

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The trials and errors of the man from the IMF

Guard who should have spotted the meltdown talks to Janet Bush

There can be few people with a keener insight into the tumult in Asia and the International Monetary Fund's handling of it than David Folkerts-Landau. Last October, when Asia was already in the early stages of what developed into full-blown financial meltdown, he left the IMF, after 15 years, and joined Deutsche Morgan Grenfell as head of its growing emerging markets team.

At the IMF, he was head of capital markets surveillance and therefore responsible for trying to identify financial market problems early on.

So how well did he do his job? Delivering his own end of term report in an interview with *The Times* he was refreshingly frank: "The state of knowledge that we had as economists inside the Fund was not such that we could see this coming. We didn't. So mea culpa."

The problem was not that the IMF was oblivious to impending financial instability in Asia, nor that it failed to deliver the appropriate warnings. Mr Folkerts-Landau visited Thailand in April 1996 and warned the authorities of growing instability in its banking sector. Talks with the South Koreans last April were, he said, very confrontational.

"They took a very hard-line attitude, namely don't lecture us. We have been here before, we will grow our way out of this," he said.

The IMF had warned Japan repeatedly since 1992 to sort out its financial sector. "They literally laughed at us. We did everything we could do, short of being kicked out of the country."

For all this, the IMF still did not anticipate Asia's banking problems leading to market meltdown.

"What we missed is just very



David Folkerts-Landau concedes that the IMF failed to understand how Asia's troubled banks would lead to ruin

simple. We approach these problems with a macroeconomic mindset. We look at a country that has almost no fiscal deficit, that has a very modest current account deficit, that has investment rates of 30 per cent of GDP: just a dream," he said.

"We thought that these countries had structural problems and that we had to push them in the right direction. But what we didn't see was that there was a huge hole in their financial system."

"In a nutshell, we failed to understand the relation between the hole in the financial sector and the macroeconomy. If we had, we would have rung alarm bells, but we didn't."

Once the crisis hit, however, Mr Folkerts-Landau defends the IMF. He rejects the widespread criticism that the IMF used identical adjustment programmes honed in Third

World countries with hopeless economic policies, but now forced on healthy economies facing a liquidity and banking crisis. Higher interest rates were the last thing Asia needed. Mr Folkerts-Landau believes there was no alternative. Allowing currencies to continue to slide would have been even more damaging to business than jacking up rates. But he does concede, in retrospect, that the Fund should probably have been less tough on fiscal policy, a mistake that is gradually being rectified in renegotiations of the terms of the various rescue packages.

The other serious charge is that the IMF bailed out Asia at all, spending money on rescuing bad lending instead of punishing them. Mr Folkerts-Landau acknowledges the moral hazard problem. He noted that much of the

bank lending to Asia came after the Mexican crisis. "It was like people said 'Let's all go in together and we will all be bailed out together'."

He admits that, in Asia's case, bank lenders had not been forced to experience enough pain but believes that the IMF had little choice but to mobilise billions of dollars of rescue money.

In the case of South Korea, strategic considerations meant that Seoul had to be bailed out. In Thailand, events were moving at unbelievable speed. "Things had to be done in 48 hours because there were queues forming outside the banks," he said. "We had to go in with a programme and give them the money despite knowing that we were bailing out the wrong people."

He sees Indonesia as a test case, arguing that the IMF must persuade Indonesia not to use its foreign exchange

reserves to bail out foreign creditors who should, he believes, be forced to accept significant losses.

"If the multilateral institutions and the G7 either directly or indirectly support bailing out of private creditors in Indonesia — however attractive that would be for this house (Deutsche Bank) — I would say that they have lost a very significant opportunity to impose discipline on the system."

"Once you have a case where bank lenders lose 50 cents in the dollar, they will be careful for the next five to seven years so that you get five to seven years to think of a better system."

Mr Folkerts-Landau has trenchant views on reforming the Fund's management of the world financial system. "There are two models of surveillance. The Fund can be a trusted adviser standing behind the emperor whispering in his ear, knowing everything, saying nothing but giving good advice."

"The other model is one which I would call in-your-face confrontational surveillance. I will stand right in front of you and I will tell you, in public, that you are doing something wrong."

In his view, the first model is not working. He called on the G7 to charge the IMF with "proper surveillance", naming and shaming countries that are mismanaging their economies.

"There is a choice that has to be made. Right now, there is a complete lack of intellectual clarity about what the IMF's role should be. The Fund has tremendous power in the markets and is not properly using it."

Looking to Asia's immediate future, Mr Folkerts-Landau believes that the financial crisis has been stabilised but that "horrendous" economic and potentially political strains lie ahead.

He predicted that inflation would be in double digits all over Asia and that unemployment will soar without any western-style safety net to catch the victims. "South Korea doesn't understand how bad this is going to be. These are people who grew up with full employment."

It is difficult to know how the new Government will react to street battles and strikes as the pain starts to bite. A blow-up in Indonesia, with civil strife and suppression of the ethnic Chinese minority, is the most frightening possibility, with dreadful consequences for the rest of the region.

He believes that Japan is still not seriously tackling its banking problems and will be no help to the region.

He said that Japan had been the most irresponsible member of the G7 and had proved that it was incapable of playing a leadership role in Asia.

Meanwhile, he argues that China is some way off from being able to act as an engine of growth and it is still distinctly possible that Beijing will devalue and trigger another bout of turmoil.

Mr Folkerts-Landau argues that a huge international effort will be needed to restore Asia to health and that the cost will be huge. He believes that easily double the billions already found will be needed before the crisis is over.

TELEVISION CHOICE

Life on the Longleat estate

Lion Country
BBC1, 3.00pm (not Scotland)

The startling thing about this daytime documentary is that it is scheduled to run five days a week for 11 weeks, making a total of 55 episodes. The makers of the series are obviously confident that their subject, the Longleat estate, will not leave them short of material. This comes from three main elements: the safari park, the village of Horningham which lies on the estate, and the colourful landowner, the 7th Marquess of Bath. All three help the project off to a promising, if unspectacular, start. *Romeo*, one of the lions, needs an operation and has to be sedated. Horningham holds a reunion of villagers and Lord Bath, who likes to wear his hair long and to pad around in bare feet, celebrates his 65th birthday. Paul Heiney is our host for what promises to be an amiable, undemanding and low-key series.

Ainsley's Meals in Minutes
BBC2, 8.30pm

Here is yet another cookery show in which the cookery is almost incidental. With the all-singing, all-dancing Ainsley Harriott in charge it could hardly be otherwise. Should Jim Davidson ever relinquish *The Generation Game* or Noel his *House Party*, Ainsley would be the natural replacement. The ostensible aim of the series is to demonstrate dishes which busy people can knock up quickly. Or, in Ainsley's unreluctant phrase, it is about "fantastic food in a flash". Tonight the studio guests are an actor-manager from Birmingham who gets spiced duckling with red cabbage (25 minutes to prepare), a single mother and her young daughters who are offered golden tuna fish triangles (20 minutes) and newswomen tempted with Canton stir-fry beef and noodles (a mere five minutes).

Great Escapes
ITV, 8.30pm

More death-defying incidents, filmed as they happened, are introduced by the racing driver Martin Brundle. Say what you like about this series, and you may feel that it borders on the voyeuristic, but it certainly offers variety. Eleven escapes are featured tonight and no two are even



Lord Bath at Longleat (BBC1, 3.00pm)

the remotest bit alike. You would not think the world could provide such a rich crop of would-be disasters. A parachute fails to open, the cable snaps during a bungee jump and an avalanche threatens to engulf tourists in the Italian Alps. Nor to mention a speedboat roaring out of control and a helicopter rescue going, as they say, pear-shaped. But the oddest is the rescue of a cockatoo. The bird is stuck on a ledge of a building seven storeys up and its owner, who has no head for heights, is forced to abseil to its rescue.

Face to Face
BBC2, 11.15pm

For once the minimalist style of *Face to Face*, in which we see the subject, a black space and nothing else, lets it down. Apart from that film she made in Britain featuring 365 bare bottoms, the artistic output of Yoko Ono has remained largely a mystery outside its own rarefied compass. Sir Jeremy Isaacs does his best to get her to elucidate a body of work that encompasses film, music, painting and happenings but Ono does little to enlighten him and therefore us. The programme tries out for visual illustration. All the same the conversation is far from wasted. It brings out Ono's pacifistic and culturally diverse life. Japanese by origin but spent mostly in the United States, and she wears forth a denial that her voyeuristic, but it certainly offers variety. Eleven escapes are featured tonight and no two are even

RADIO CHOICE

Postscript: Taking the Waters
Radio 3, 9.35pm

No, not another series about privatised utilities: this one delves much deeper into history and some of the people that Kathleen Griffin meets are more interesting than the boats round at the water board. The series runs every night this week, with each programme visiting a different spa in a different country. Tonight the destination is Cheltenham, where the programme starts with the opening of the annual music festival. That event has to some extent eclipsed the spa, as has the competition from Bath. But as someone remarks tonight, water and music have much in common as restorative agents. The history of spas is fascinating, even if the evidence for the benefits of hanging about in steaming water is not especially convincing.

RADIO 1

8.30am Kevin Greening and Zoe Ball 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whiley Includes at 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Dave Pearce 5.45 Newsbeat 6.30 Steve Lamacq 7.15 Evening Session 8.30 Trade Update 8.40 Andy Kershaw 9.30 Mary Anne Hobbs 1.00am Chris Warren 4.00 Chris Moyles

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 8.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Anne Robinson 1.30pm Debbie Thompson 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.30 John Dunn 7.00 Humphrey Lyttelton 8.00 Malcolm McLaren 8.30pm News 9.00 Newsbeat 9.30 Big Band Special 9.30pm News 10.00 Newsbeat 10.30pm News 11.00 Newsbeat 11.30pm News 12.00am News

RADIO 3

6.00am The Breakfast Programme 8.00 Nicky Campbell 12.00 Midday with Mark 2.00pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Newsbeat 7.00 News Extra 7.30 The Monday Melancholy 7.45pm News 8.00 Newsbeat 8.30pm News 9.00 Newsbeat 9.30pm News 10.00 Newsbeat 10.30pm News 11.00 Newsbeat 11.30pm News 12.00am News

RADIO 4

7.00am Chris Evans 10.00 News 10.30pm News 11.00pm News 12.00am News 1.00am News 1.30am News 2.00am News 2.30am News 3.00am News 3.30am News 4.00am News 4.30am News 5.00am News 5.30am News 6.00am News 6.30am News 7.00am News 7.30am News 8.00am News 8.30am News 9.00am News 9.30am News 10.00am News 10.30am News 11.00am News 11.30am News 12.00am News

RADIO 5

6.00am On Air, with Andrew McGregor. Includes Mozart (Divergence in F), Dvorak (The Water Goblin), Walton (Overture Portsmouth Point), Bach (Double Violin Concerto in D minor), Wagner (Ride of the Valkyries, Die Walkure), Beethoven (Piano Sonata in F minor).

RADIO 6

6.00am Artist of the Week: James Bowman. This week, the countertenor James Bowman talks to Joan Bakewell about the influences that have led to his success.

RADIO 7

1.00pm Composer of the Week: Dmitri Shostakovich. 1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. Live from St John's, Smith Square, London. Wanders: Vincent Coq, piano, Jean-Marc Philippe, violin, and Raphael Pidoux, cello. Haydn (Piano Trio in E flat); Chopin (Piano Trio in minor).

RADIO 8

2.00 The BBC Orchestra. BBC Symphony Orchestra: under Andrew Davis and Pierre Boulez. Kyoko Takasawa, violin. Stravinsky (Symphony in E flat); Dvorak (Violin Concerto); The Rite of Spring.

RADIO 9

4.00 Music Matters, with Iwan Hawes. Includes: Protopopov conducting Shostakovich, and a look at the newly-formed European Opera Centre performing Mozart at Budon (1).

RADIO 10

5.55am (LW) Shipping Forecast 6.00 News Briefing 6.10 Farming Today 6.25 Prayer for the Day 6.30 Today 8.45 Beyond the Millennium. The social gerontologist Mian Bernard sounds a warning note about ageing (6/6) 8.55 Weather

RADIO 11

9.00 News 9.05 Start the Week, with the Times. 9.10 News 9.15 News 9.20 News 9.25 News 9.30 News 9.35 News 9.40 News 9.45 News 9.50 News 9.55 News 10.00 News 10.05 News 10.10 News 10.15 News 10.20 News 10.25 News 10.30 News 10.35 News 10.40 News 10.45 News 10.50 News 10.55 News 11.00 News 11.05 News 11.10 News 11.15 News 11.20 News 11.25 News 11.30 News 11.35 News 11.40 News 11.45 News 11.50 News 11.55 News 12.00 News 12.05 News 12.10 News 12.15 News 12.20 News 12.25 News 12.30 News 12.35 News 12.40 News 12.45 News 12.50 News 12.55 News 1.00 News 1.05 News 1.10 News 1.15 News 1.20 News 1.25 News 1.30 News 1.35 News 1.40 News 1.45 News 1.50 News 1.55 News 2.00 News 2.05 News 2.10 News 2.15 News 2.20 News 2.25 News 2.30 News 2.35 News 2.40 News 2.45 News 2.50 News 2.55 News 3.00 News 3.05 News 3.10 News 3.15 News 3.20 News 3.25 News 3.30 News 3.35 News 3.40 News 3.45 News 3.50 News 3.55 News 4.00 News 4.05 News 4.10 News 4.15 News 4.20 News 4.25 News 4.30 News 4.35 News 4.40 News 4.45 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2 Royal
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PROFILE 43
Behind the scenes at Rolls-Royce

BUSINESS

BARRELS 45
Roger Bootle pours oil on troubled waters



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

MONDAY FEBRUARY 16 1998

Wage awards fuel fears of higher rates

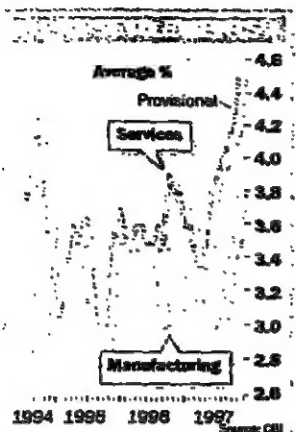
BY JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS EDITOR

PAY settlements in manufacturing industry jumped ahead at the tail end of last year, according to the Confederation of British Industry.

Its latest Pay Databank Survey showed that manufacturing pay deals averaged 3.8 per cent in the three months to December, a marked rise from the 3.5 per cent average in the three months to November.

Pay awards in service industries were also up, averaging 4.5 per cent in the three months to December from 4.2 per cent in the three months to November.

Upward pressure on wages is the key current concern in the policy debate now raging within the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee. Three members of the eight-person committee voted for a rise in interest rates in January, partly because of fears that falling unemployment



and buoyant demand would lead to an acceleration of wage inflation.

Wages are also a key reason why the Bank of England's Inflation Report, published last week, said that the odds were on another rise in interest rates. In spite of accumulating evidence that the economy is decelerating, the Bank itself cautioned

that not too much weight should be attached to figures from last autumn, the period covered by the CBI's survey.

The Bank said that January's figures are crucial because about one quarter of the deals tracked by its database occur in that month. It said that its early findings suggest that settlements appeared to have risen again in January.

This is not the message from the latest figures available from Industrial Relations Services, whose December statistics are cited in the Inflation Report. The IRS said that its median pay review level remained static at 3.6 per cent, the same as in December.

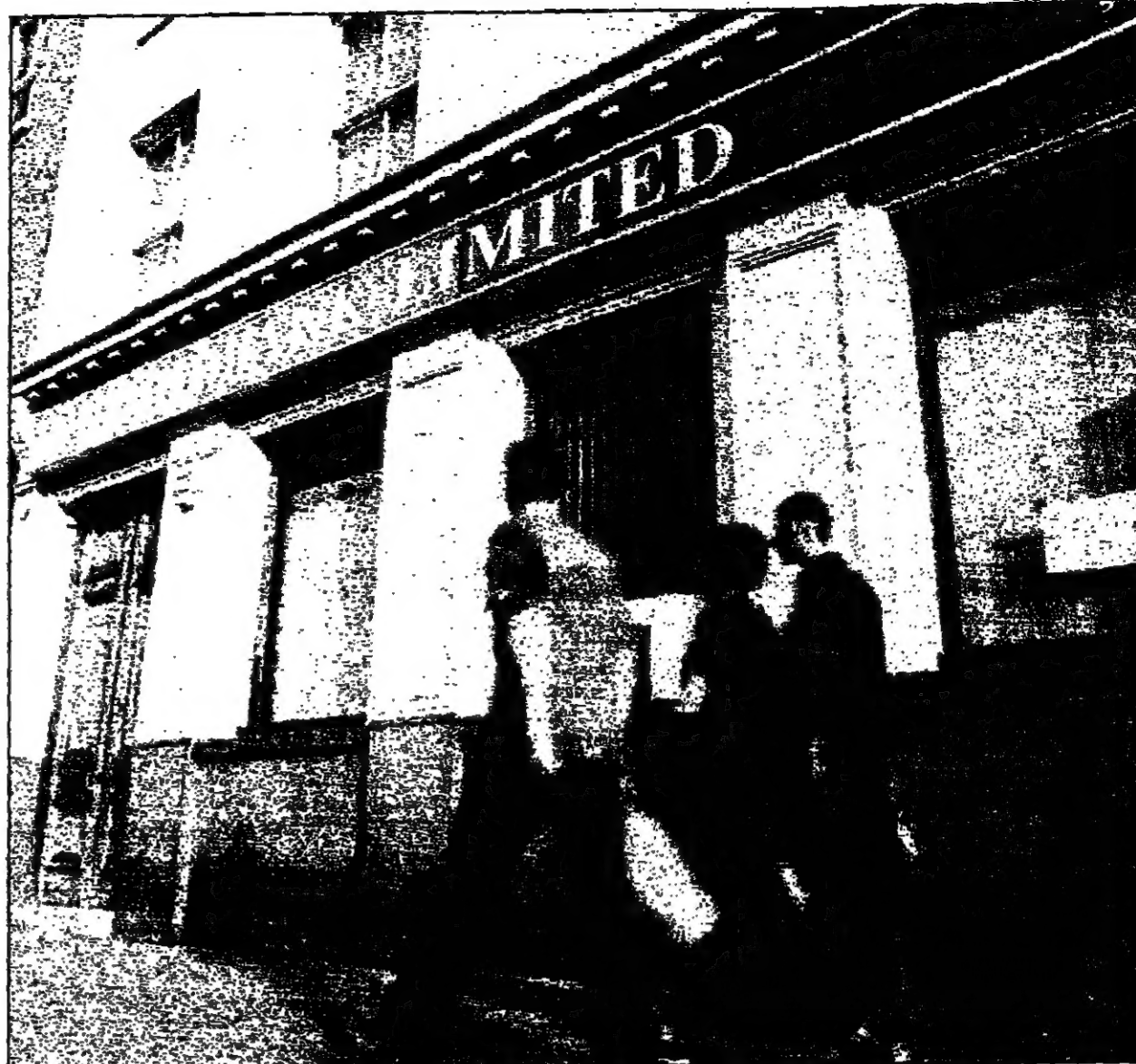
Paul Thompson, of IRS, said that the unexpected fall in the headline rate of inflation in January to 3.3 per cent should help to bring the level of wage settlements lower. Wage negotiations widely use the headline rate as a guide.

The MPC itself admitted in the minutes of its January meeting that its own interest rates rises had previously added to upward pressure on wage settlements by pushing up the headline rate.

There are a growing number of economists who are challenging the Bank of England's pessimism on wages. Peter Warburton, UK economist at Flettings Research, said that much of the concern over the rise in median pay settlements towards the end of last year is a direct consequence of the rise in headline RPI after July's Budget and successive interest rate rises. He said that this technical distortion is already beginning to unwind, boding well for pay negotiations in the months ahead.

Geoffrey Dicks and John O'Sullivan, at NatWest Markets, argue that headline inflation will converge towards underlying inflation, which fell to 2.5 per cent in January, as last year's increases in mortgage rates fall out of year-on-year comparisons. They said: "This should produce a more inflation-benign 1998-99 pay round, especially as rising unemployment in the second half of this year is a distinct possibility."

Michael Dicks, economist at Lehman Brothers, in contrast, shares the Bank's concerns.



The closure of UBL's Commercial Street branch brings the total number of UK branch closures to six since March.

Asian bank shrinks branches

BY JANET BUSH IN LONDON
AND ZAHID HUSSEIN IN KARACHI

THE Bank of England has been involved with the closure of half of the British branches of Pakistan's third-largest bank against a background of allegations of fraud and multi-million pound losses.

United Bank Limited was founded by the same man who set up Bank of Credit & Commerce International (BCCI), which failed in 1991 amid fierce criticism of the supervisory role of the Bank of England.

This decade arguably led to the Bank being stripped of its supervision powers by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor.

UBL has closed six of its 11 UK branches since March last year when an alleged multi-million pound fraud was discovered at its Oldham branch.

Zubyr Soomro, president of UBL, told The Times yesterday that another two branches would be closed this year to lessen losses due to bad loans.



UBL's Mark Lane branch is no longer open for business.

but said that this move was not under pressure from the Bank of England.

The case of UBL has been highlighted by the proceedings of an industrial tribunal in Manchester, expected to run throughout this month.

A group of employees claiming unfair dismissal have made allegations of widespread fraud in the bank, saying that they have internal

documents and taped conversations to back their claims. Some former employees have long blamed the Bank of England for forcing their sackings. The spotlight on UBL is likely to move from the industrial tribunal in Manchester to Karachi this month when the International Monetary Fund is due to visit.

Progress in privatising its state banks is one condition of

a \$1.56 billion three-year loan programme to Pakistan from the IMF.

Given the catastrophic banking problems with which the Fund has been grappling in Asia, the IMF is likely to place even greater emphasis than usual on the health, or otherwise, of Pakistan's state banks.

The original deadline to privatise UBL by June looks increasingly difficult given the highly politicised fraud allegations in Britain.

Since Mr Soomro, a former City banker, was appointed president in July 1997, more than 5,500 employees have been made redundant and more than 150 branches have closed.

He said that the drastic action taken in the UK, which accounted for most of the bank's overseas bad debts, had ensured that recovery of bad debts had improved markedly.

He said that the UK operation would make a profit this year.

German firms 'least ready' for euro

BY JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS EDITOR

GERMAN companies are less well prepared for the single currency than other European firms and more pessimistic about the advent of economic and monetary union (EMU), according to a survey by Grant Thornton International and Business Strategies.

It says German companies are significantly behind others with 51 per cent saying they did not know what impact the euro would have on their business. This figure compares with an average 40 per cent in the EU and is more than twice the 25 per cent recorded in Britain — even though the UK is not planning to join during the current parliament.

Only 16 per cent of German firms felt positive about the euro, well down on the EU average of 29 per cent and Britain's 31 per cent.

Bridget Rosewell, executive chairman of Business Strategies, said: "This is a little worrying given that the Germans are likely to be introducing the euro in 1999."

The survey concludes that European small to medium sized companies are only now beginning to wake up to the implications of economic and monetary union.

Stephen Dexter, Grant Thornton partner and EMU spokesman, said: "The effects of EMU will be greater than the combined effects of devaluation, VAT and the millennium."

He said 37 per cent of businesses in Europe had not considered or acted upon the implications of the single currency. On average, 1 per cent have taken action, with only 6 per cent in Britain.

John Redwood, shadow President of the Board of Trade, is taking a roadshow around Britain, urging businesses not to prepare for British membership of the euro, expressly against the wishes of Gordon Brown, the Chancellor.

Mr Redwood said that he is urging business to prepare for the euro as another foreign currency but not as Britain's domestic currency. He said that there are too many obstacles and hurdles on the way.

Andersen seeks to break up company

BY GRAHAM SEARJEANT, FINANCIAL EDITOR

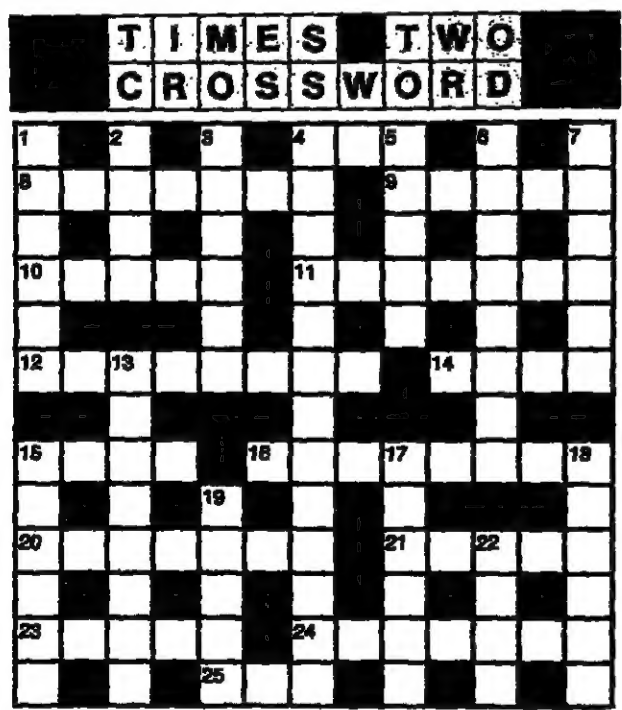
AS KPMG and Ernst & Young partners met in London to discuss the collapse of their plan to create the world's biggest accountancy company, new steps were being taken in New York to break up the existing leader of accountancy's big six firms.

Andersen Consulting has filed a suit against Andersen Worldwide, its parent. The profitable consultancy partnership wants to stop Andersen Worldwide changing internal rules to avoid arbitration over a proposal to break up the organisation.

AC wants to go its own way and accuses Arthur Andersen, the accounting business, of breaching agreements between the two by expanding its own consulting practice.

Andersen Consulting also seeks the return of \$400 million (£250 million) in income-sharing payments.

Partners at KPMG and Ernst & Young held separate meetings. An early KMMG strategy is to target dissatisfied clients of Price Waterhouse and Ernst & Young, whose merger is still being pursued.



No 1330

ACROSS

- Driver's compartment (5)
- A wrench (7)
- Coordinate; straighten (5)
- Bonus move (5)
- Poise (7)
- Decisive gunfight (5-3); suddenly extend (5,3)
- English saint, historian (4)
- Verdi Egyptian opera (4)
- Weight, intensity (8)
- One missing up task (7)
- Darling girl (Peter Pan) (5)
- Play (instrument) idly (5)
- Tomb inscription (7)
- Block (action; of soap) (3)

DOWN

- Evaluate (6)
- With dull surface (4)
- Unopened, unharmed (6)
- Screen, in alarm (slang) (3,4,6)
- Snooker-table line, area (5)
- Swedish botanist, naming-system inventor (8)
- In celebratory mode (2,4)
- Humdrum unvarying parts of Mass (8)
- Head nun (6)
- US non-mainland state (6)
- Mower's implement (6)
- Ascend (5)
- Trim; undiluted (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1329

- ACROSS: 1 Swagger 5 Jacks 8 Agony 9 Scholar 10 Dood 11 Well-being 12 Powwow 14 Bother 17 Ploughman 18 Big 19 Topsoil 20 Crave 21 Pleat 22 Tidings
- DOWN: 1 Stand up 2 Avoid 3 Guy 4 Result 5 John Brown 6 Colish 7 Spring 11 Wrong-foot 13 Whoopee 15 Regress 16 Amulet 17 Put up 18 Brawn 20 Cod

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217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000, 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004, 1005, 1006, 1007, 1008, 1009, 1010, 1011, 1012, 1013, 1014, 1015, 1016, 1017, 1018, 1019, 1020, 1021, 1022, 1023, 1024, 1025, 1026, 1027, 1028, 1029, 1030, 1031, 1032, 1033, 1034, 1035, 1036, 1037, 1038, 1039, 1040, 1041, 1042, 1043, 1044, 1045, 1046, 1047, 1048, 1049, 1050, 1051, 1052, 1053, 1054, 1055, 1056, 1057, 1058, 1059, 1060, 1061, 1062, 1063, 1064, 1065, 1066, 1067, 1068, 1069, 1070, 1071, 1072, 1073, 1074, 1075, 1076, 1077, 1078, 1079, 1080, 1081, 1082, 1083, 1084, 1085, 1086, 1087, 1088, 1089, 1090, 1091, 1092, 1093, 1094, 1095, 1096, 1097, 1098, 1099, 1100, 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104, 1105, 1106, 1107, 1108, 1109, 1110, 1111, 1112, 1113, 1114, 1115, 1116, 1117, 1118, 1119, 1120, 1121, 1122, 1123, 1124, 1125, 1126, 1127, 1128, 1129, 1130, 1131, 1132, 1133, 1134, 1135, 1136, 1137, 1138, 1139, 1140, 1141, 1142, 1143, 1144, 1145, 1146, 1147, 1148, 1149, 1150, 1151, 1152, 1153, 1154, 1155, 1156, 1157, 1158, 1159, 1160, 1161, 1162, 1163, 1164, 1165, 1166, 1167, 1168, 1169, 1170, 1171, 1172, 1173, 1174, 1175, 1176, 1177, 1178, 1179, 1180, 1181, 1182, 1183, 1184, 1185, 1186, 1187, 1188, 1189, 1190, 1191, 1192, 1193, 1194, 1195, 1196, 1197, 1198, 1199, 1200, 1201, 1202, 1203, 1204, 1205, 1206, 1207, 1208, 1209, 1210, 1211, 1212, 1213, 1214, 1215, 1216, 1217, 1218, 1219, 1220, 1221, 1222, 1223, 1224, 1225, 1226, 1227, 1228, 1229, 1230, 1231, 1232, 1233, 1234, 1235, 1236, 1237, 1238, 1239, 1240, 1241, 1242, 1243, 1244, 1245, 1246, 1247, 1248, 1249, 1250, 1251, 1252, 1253, 1254, 1255, 1256, 1257, 1258, 1259, 1260, 1261, 1262, 1263, 1264, 1265, 1266, 1267, 1268, 1269, 1270, 1271, 1272, 1273, 1274, 1275, 1276, 1277, 1278, 1279, 1280, 1281, 1282, 1283, 1284, 1285, 1286, 1287, 1288, 1289, 1290, 1291, 1292, 1293, 1294, 1295, 1296, 1297, 1298, 1299, 1300, 1301, 1302, 1303, 1304, 1305, 1306, 1307, 1308, 1309, 1310, 1311, 1312, 1313, 1314, 1315, 1316, 1317, 1318, 1319, 1320, 1321, 1322, 1323, 1324, 1325, 1326, 1327, 1328, 1329, 1330, 1331, 1332, 1333, 1334, 1335, 1336, 1337, 1338, 1339, 1340, 1341, 1342, 1343, 1344